

# **ARTWORKS AND NETWORKS: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF CREATIVES AND URBAN SPACES IN MANCHESTER AND BRNO**

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**Declaration**

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I, Aaron Mo, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm this has been indicated in this thesis.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'AM' or similar initials, written in a cursive style.

Date:

12 September 2013

## Abstract

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Recently, the cultural and creative industries have been hot topics in the planning field. This thesis proposes and develops a nuanced and differentiated account of 'creatives': examining the different phases of work activities and their interplay with the built environment, other people, and times of day.

The research comprises an extensive review of literatures drawn from a variety of disciplines, which then informs an empirical study using ethnographic methods. While this approach does preclude large-scale statistical generalisation, it does yield fine detail about the 'creatives', their practices and needs; detail which has commonly not been available to policymakers and planners.

The empirical subjects of this study are in Manchester and Brno, both second-order cities in their national contexts. This choice of cities starts to correct the bias in much of the literature towards London, New York and a few other global hubs. The choice of Brno begins to counter the dominance of Western cities in research coverage. The historical and cultural differences between the two cities help define the geographic and spatial patterns of work activities that may not coincide with similar studies on the industry done elsewhere.

The thesis finds that the more networks a creative person is part of, the better it is for the development of his or her practice. Networking is useful for most aspects of the industry, especially knowledge accumulation. The best places to network were found to be certain spaces at events that bring many people together, and social occasions once an event finishes. However, there are two issues. First, not all people working in the cultural and creative industries want to be networked with one another. Secondly, some other activities are not compatible with a typical networking environment. The ethnography identifies methods used to combat these problems.

## Preface & acknowledgements

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My interest in the relationship between urban spaces and people working in the cultural and creative industries<sup>1</sup> stemmed from my master's dissertation (Mo, 2005a). I had noticed the divergence between different creative actors and their activities in Lower East Side tenements and other parts of New York. I wanted to study this further, but this time in Europe.

My personal history has not only directed my taste and interest in certain artistic forms and the way they express their ideas, but also my choice of case studies. Manchester was an obvious candidate as a case study because I grew up listening to British indie music, on which Manchester was a huge influence (Haslam, 2000). Also I have personal knowledge of Greater Manchester.<sup>2</sup>

Many previous works on Manchester's cultural and creative industries that I have read, suggest that only researching into Manchester alone can generate a large amount of new questions about Manchester's cultural and creative industries. However, I always planned to make a comparative study, as I am interested in observing differences and similarities of these industries; particularly on the local contextual influence of network clusters and work behaviours.

I became interested in Central and Eastern European cultures as from 2006. That year I was doing European Voluntary Service in Rome. Here I worked on refurbishing a cultural centre with groups of other European volunteers. This was my first time living outside England, and was an ideal opportunity to meet and spend time with other foreigners.<sup>3</sup> I personally found that most of those from Central and Eastern European countries had an intriguing work ethos and cultural qualities that I wanted to explore further in relation to the cultural and creative industries. Moreover, at the time, academic research in English, about the region's cultural and creative industries was limited. This would be my thesis' largest contribution.

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<sup>1</sup> Power & Nielsén (2010) pointed out, the conceptual definition of the 'creative industry' and the 'cultural industry' is contested, overlapping, and 'interchangeable' (see also Adorno & Horkheimer, 1977; Scott, 2000; Power & Scott, 2004; Garnham, 2005; Pratt, 2005; Galloway & Dunlop, 2007; Jeffcutt & Pratt, 2009; Miller, 2009). Yet, there are distinctions: 'creative industry' places emphasis on creative individuals' knowledge and innovation to produce and commodify principal outputs or core products; while the 'cultural industry' can be defined as "those that generate symbolic meaning" (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007, p.28) and "are based around a combination of five main criteria – creativity, intellectual property, symbolic meaning, use value and methods of production" (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007, p 19). Choosing which industry to cover would further narrow the study, and subsequently allow the possibility to develop a deeper understanding of certain aspects, as oppose to developing a superficial overview, of this prevailing economy.

<sup>2</sup> I have family living in Stockport, and used to visit them every summer and Christmas.

<sup>3</sup> I lived with a Hungarian and worked with Croatians and Serbians whilst volunteering in Italy. My previous encounters with people related to Central Eastern Europe were with second and third generation Poles in my home borough, Ealing.



Brno, the second city in Czech Republic, was chosen as the second case study because it initially seemed the most comparable city, in terms of city status, within a list of potential cities from the region participating with the ERASMUS student exchange programme. I used the student exchange programme as a way to obtain additional funding for my doctorate.

This intellectual pursuit could have only been achieved with my father's, Dr Chi-Leung Mo's, financial support and Michael Edwards' continual supervision since my undergraduate degree. I am also grateful to all those, past and present, at UCL Bartlett School of Planning for their many years of teaching and support, which allowed me to develop my interest in creativity and cultural awareness within the planning context.

The main research method of this thesis was ethnographic fieldwork, which is an uncommon method in my discipline. Alternatively, I could have used Space Syntax Modelling<sup>4</sup>, which I learnt during a previous employment with *Intelligent Space Partnership*. Furthermore, this thesis argues for greater use of quantitative research about the cultural and creative industries in Planning Studies, to obtain a basic understanding of all the nuances of the cultural and creative industries' processes that may be influenced by the built environment. However, to fully obtain sufficient workable data within the required time constraint of a lone researcher will be difficult. Ethnographic methods could be a tool for forming the base of future quantitative research with enrichment of underpinning research data. Moreover, it is my preferred learning method in dealing with dyslexia at my education level.<sup>5</sup> I am not only grateful for Dr Ger Duijzings' supervision in guiding and advising me through the ethnography process in an urban environment, but also for his knowledge of the Central Eastern European region.

The fieldwork was mainly undertaken by myself, but I must acknowledge my informants, especially Bill and Mark in Manchester and Barbora and Lenka in Brno<sup>6</sup>, without whose help I would not have been able to gather the significant amount of data required. I would also like to thank everyone who helped me to get information that I could not have possibly got myself during the fieldwork.

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<sup>4</sup> See Hillier, 1999; Ratti, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> I believe that I am well suited to ethnographic research because I have always had to learn through discussions, participation, and images. These methods were recommended to me as ways in dealing with dyslexia at university. Besides, I suppose that my empathy towards creative people; developed through my experience in painting, drafting, making photographs, performing, and mixing with 'creative types', gives me an edge over many of my planning colleagues in contributing to ethnographic research in cultural and creative industries.

<sup>6</sup> I have experienced many creatives being hostile or distrustful towards me. Many citing planners as only interested in discussing about 'preconceived' places and organisations and not wanting to "acknowledge the real places where we go" (a quote from an angry artist in a 2007 scoping study). This was reinforced by Bill when he observed patterns in questions asked by academics and only taking notes of similar "things they want to hear" during interviews.

You know who you are. In addition, a special mention goes to Jan Blaszczak for informing me about some events and acting as a translator in Brno. My informants from the scoping studies were vital during the fieldwork period from 4 August 2008 to 16 November 2009. They allowed me into their respective worlds and introduced me to other informants, local creative scenes, and even helped me to find accommodation. As you will find out in the course of this thesis' narrative, my key informants could not provide a complete picture of the creative profiles in both cities. However, they did enable me to gain a good impression of creatives and urban space patterns in Manchester and Brno.

Writing this doctoral thesis was a very hard and stressful period. I would like to acknowledge Ashley Bladon, Dr Malcolm Chandler and Dr Chuen Chan for their time and effort in proofreading my thesis. I would also like to apologise to my family and love, Dr Karolina Rostkowska, for demanding so much support and patience during my numerous emotional breakdowns.

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## Part 1: Introduction

### The approach

This thesis is aimed at those interested in furthering their understanding of creative people and their response to the urban environment. Before reading what this thesis is about, the reader is warned that it is based on ethnographic research therefore will not be researched and written as a standard Planning Studies dissertation.

The ethnography itself will be a shock at first, in that the sections of thesis will discuss seemingly unrelated phenomena to cultural and creative industries; for example Czechs' leisure time activities in the countryside. Please persist with the 'mosaic' of deep ethnographic descriptions and 'flows of impressions'. As this thesis moves on, these findings will come together to deliver a more comprehensive picture than can be achieved by a traditional approach. Hopefully, time will allow an appreciation of the majority of the concepts.

### Artworks

The contemporary term of *artwork* is no longer constrained to paintings and drawings. It can also be considered as including photographs, poetry and possibly digital media. So, who are the artistic producers in the cultural and creative industries? The widely accepted definition in the planning and cultural field was set by UK's Department for Culture Media and Sport's (DCMS) 1998 document *Creative Industries: Mapping document*.<sup>7</sup> According to this document, the fundamental set of practices are: advertising; antiques; architecture; crafts; design; fashion; film; leisure; music; performing arts; publishing; software; and, TV and radio (DCMS, 1998).

Another landmark publication that defined the planning impact of the cultural and creative industries was Richard Florida's (2002) book *The Rise of The Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community And Everyday Life*.<sup>8</sup> Florida's thesis 'enlightened' many people, either as readers or from hearsay, how humans that use their creativity for work, is an untapped economic resource (it was described as human *creativity*<sup>9</sup>), which has an important role to play in the city.

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<sup>7</sup> This observation is from my participation in and reading of creative and cultural-related work in the past two decades.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Florida's (2002) book is commonly known as *The Rise of The Creative Class*.

<sup>9</sup> "The creative impulse – the attribute that distinguishes us, as humans, from other species – is now being let loose on an unprecedented scale [...] we now have an economy powered by human creativity" (Florida, 2002, p. 5).

One of Florida's deductions from his 2002 thesis is the desirability of geographical clustering of a range of technology, talent (i.e., people of all creative sectors and alternative lifestyles)<sup>10</sup> and tolerance. This deduction has drawn particular attention from planners, and has been manifested as policies aimed at the physical clustering of a wide range of land uses, resulting in the potential to compliment, or clash with the pre-existing creative activities - normally known as 'creative clusters' or 'creative milieus'.

*The Rise of The Creative Class* was a decade old at the time of the production of this thesis. Since 2002, it has influenced many governments at all levels in developing creative-orientated policies. Many planning practitioners have tended to make creative-orientated policies with DCMS's (1998) and Florida's (2002) wide definitions in mind (see chapter one). As we will see in chapter two, it is widely assumed that the all-embracing scope of Florida's definition would alleviate the risk of betting on any particular sector's economic prosperity, which is preferred in the current economic climate. Hence, I will look at work and clustering patterns of a variety of sectors and propose that any creative-orientated academic research should ideally relate to this broad range of sectors, or tailor its proposals to explicitly-chosen activities.

Florida's thesis has also been scrutinised, often negatively, by many influential scholars, like Ann Markusen (2006) and Jamie Peck (2005). It has left a legacy as the most referenced theory of the cultural and creative industries.<sup>11</sup> I have participated in several creative and culture-related conferences and seminars, consultations, and read numerous written materials<sup>12</sup> and observed some of my academic peers 'coming out' as believers in the Creative Class [sic].<sup>13</sup> Consequently, this thesis cannot avoid using *The Rise of The Creative Class* as the departure point, and will lead the first chapter of the literature review with considering the Creative Class as artistic producers.

This thesis is not a critique on all the aspects of the creative and cultural economies covered by *The Rise of The Creative Class*. However; it will be of interest in further investigating the notion of *physical and social clustering* of the cultural and creative industries. It should also be of use in further studies on the artistic producers' working behaviour. However, it is important to note that I do not agree with the theoretical notion of absolute physical clustering of people and skills, the emphasis on technology in the cultural and creative industries

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<sup>10</sup> See figure 1 for Richard Florida's definition of the Creative Class.

<sup>11</sup> Florida's *Creative Class* hypothesis and terminology was a useful intellectual reference point when developing conversation about my research during fieldwork. Many of my artistic informants from Manchester and Brno know of the term from seminars or everyday exposure. The term is used by national newspapers like *The Guardian*.

<sup>12</sup> See this thesis' *Bibliography* for an idea of my participation in this subject.

<sup>13</sup> The Capitalisation of the term 'Creative Class' and similar terms comes from the original publications, e.g., Florida's (2002).

and Florida's hypothesis of the Creative Class. Instead, I am interested in providing an alternative theory of the 'creative ecosystem', how all creative activities may interrelate with spaces and places, and to consider whether all these activities should be confined to one area.

## Networks

Along with creative activities, another central theme to this thesis is the investigation of the location of common activities.

Mike Crang (2011) and Amin & Thrift (1992) rightly questioned if geography matters in the contemporary industries. This is especially so, if you consider creativity and the globalised economic patterns of modern industries, which are less place-orientated than traditional industries. He concluded that it did matter, but only as an anchor point for 'network nodes', i.e., where people, ideas or organisations meet.

Economic geographer Ron Boschma's (2005) work also stated that geographical proximity has a key impact on interactive learning and innovation. However, as we will see in chapter three, his 2005 paper also declared it as only one of five dimensions of proximities that are essential to the cultural and creative industries. These others are connected through mostly non-physical commonalities,<sup>14</sup> which could locate 'network nodes' beyond city or national boundaries, producing global networks.

Cultural sociologist Xin Gu (2010) and planning economist Elizabeth Currid (2007) both highlighted the importance of networking in the cultural and creative industries. They agree with Boschma's 2005 concept that these networks may be bonded by (globalising) non-physical commonalities but still require face-to-face encounters. The bonding of creative people will be investigated in chapter four. This thesis will investigate the forming of networks in more detail by understanding the network of cultural and creative industries, *work activities* and *cluster formation*, and how 'network nodes' in cities like Manchester and Brno relate to a potentially global 'creative ecosystem'.

However, it should be noted that this thesis will not make a complete observation of all the sectors specified in the DCMS' 1998 document. To accomplish a deep and comprehensive study of all people who can be deemed creative is almost unattainable by a single researcher working within a

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<sup>14</sup> The other proximities are cognitive, organizational, social and institutional.

doctorate timeframe. Moreover, I know many people working in the creative or cultural industry<sup>15</sup> but have no experience of wider networks.

## The structure

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### The remainder of part 1

The main body of the thesis is split into four parts: the introduction, the literature review, the ethnography and the conclusion.

One of the roles of part 1 is to inform the reader of the approach of the thesis and justify the use of the ethnographic methodology. This is important because ethnography is not a common methodology in Planning Studies. Since this planning thesis will take a largely ethnographic approach to compare the cultural and creative industries in Manchester and Brno, it is necessary to justify the use of exclusively a qualitative research methodology, and how it fits with a hypothetical cultural planner's interest in networks (see: '*the methodology*' section).<sup>16</sup>

Following on from the justification for using ethnography, the methodology will explain the researcher's preparation and approach to undertaking fieldwork. At the same time, there will be moments of self-reflection by the researcher in how his personal history may affect the research direction. This awareness will help the reader to understand that such ethnography is unique to the researcher and would appear different if done by a different researcher. The end of '*the methodology*' section validates the method of data collection and analysis.

Part 1 closes by stating the contribution of this research to planning academics and practitioners who are interested in the cultural and creative industries.

### Part 2: Literature review

The first chapter of this multifaceted literature review is to identify the people who produce artistic goods or services. The departure point will be Richard Florida's (2002) widely known concept of the Creative Class. The thesis will reject the concept mainly on the basis of the use of the term 'class'. The rest of this chapter will justify that the core groups of people in the study should be considered as a stratification of creatives who may cross paths with each other and with those who may not necessarily be creative people.

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<sup>15</sup> I have spent years actively participating in art projects, consuming of certain types of art and music, and have friends in various art and fashion circles.

<sup>16</sup> The methodology begins from page 15.

The following chapter looks at past studies of creatives' interaction with the built environment in different cultures. It will begin by looking at New York, a common case for those interested in such research issues, and comprehend how the stratification identified in the preceding chapter may appear in urban areas. Additionally, it will also hint at the emergence of 'tribal' networks within industries and beyond cities. The second chapter will then turn its attention to the trends and issues of contemporary developments in cultural policies and how it relates to local cultures.

Chapters three and four include a more theoretical look at the global creative ecosystem. We will see in chapter three that the creative ecosystem is made up of two environments: one catering for creative production, and another for the creative market. These two environments are connected by networks of geographic and cognitive proximity (Boschma, 2005), i.e., the zone of influence. Chapter three also notes that creatives are not confined to the creative ecosystem, especially with regard to funding their practice.

In the fourth chapter, the reader is introduced to the differences and segregated nature of people in a cultural and creative industry. Yet, the development of an industry relies on the synergy between people and their ideas. This chapter will investigate some possible social, physical and virtual mechanisms that aid networking and the passing of information between unacquainted groups of people. The importance of connections and social bonds between people will emerge as vital to any cultural and creative industry.

The final chapter of the literature review focuses on Manchester and Brno. It considers how their respective national, regional and local cultural-entrepreneurial history and socio-economic networks could affect Manchester and Brno cultural and creative industries. Part 2 will end by identifying potential areas that could influence this thesis.

### **Part 3: The ethnography**

Part 3 is the ethnography; the narratives will also contextualise the observations made from the fieldwork with the earlier research findings reviewed in the previous chapters.

Like the literature review, the ethnography begins with accessing the core groups of people in the study. Chapter six is separated into two parts: it first identifies the creatives and then the influential non-creatives in the study (referred to in this thesis as 'blurred edges'). The first part begins by setting out the uniqueness of the data in this ethnography by reflecting on and profiling the creatives found during the fieldwork. It will then offer information on the typical circumstances leading these people to reside in Manchester or Brno, and outline their opinions of the general benefits and disadvantages of working as



creatives in their respective city. The following part of the chapter describes why the technicians, cultural gatekeepers, workplace managers and socialites may affect the development of a creative's practice.

The following two chapters will provide an in-depth insight into work activities, and their location, in and out of the creative ecosystem. Chapter seven concentrates on the activities during creative production. It will first look at the types of work people may perform at home, and the dangers that attempting to mix home and work activities may bring; further, hinting at the dangers of mixing too many creative activities in one space. Following on from this, the chapter will provide a full description of the common phases of work activities in both Manchester and Brno. We will see where they occur and with whom people work with when producing output. The final part of chapter seven will look at the work activities that are performed during recreational places, such as pubs, which is ostensibly an important part of networking in the cultural and creative industry. By the end of this chapter the reader should have a good idea that there are many activities in a creative's practice; some of which require isolation and others need to be performed as a group, therefore, requiring multiple workplaces.

Chapter eight pays attention to the financial side of the creative's practice. It first identifies some of the issues creatives have when entering the local and global creative market. Ultimately, the chapter suggest that most creatives need to find a second income to fund their practice. This thesis identifies three broad typologies of obtaining a second income. The typologies are identified by their differences in potential to provide opportunities to further networking and acquisition of new knowledge, which could be beneficial to creative production. The chapter will end by making observations on how networks may be used as a way to the pooling and sharing of resources, which reduce the overheads for creative goods and services; which therefore, is a cost-cutting strategy to reduce the pressure of finding additional funds.

Chapter nine focuses on the creatives' workplaces. It first describes, locates, compares and contrasts the individual and collective workplaces found during the Manchester and Brno fieldworks. It will also make observations on the use of virtual communication and its appliances like laptops and smartphones. Just as with chapter four, despite the rise of virtual technology, there is an emphasis on the importance of using and moving to different workplaces, especially for networking.

The final two chapters of this ethnographic discussion will explain how events may bring certain groups of people together and subsequent social activities and spatial-temporal management can prompt networking activities. The narrative of the ethnography will make the reader aware of the differences between creatives, their needs and activities. Nevertheless, it will also point out

that creatives rely on networks for the development and sustainability of their practice. Networking is a group activity.

#### **Part 4: Conclusion**

The final part of this thesis begins by recapping the main conceptual framework developed in the literature review. Following on from this the conclusion will then produce findings in the ethnography, relate them to the literature review and offer some personal opinions of the deduction. A section of tentative policy suggestions will follow and then the thesis will end with a reflection on the study.

#### **DVD and appendix**

One of the main threads or debates in this thesis is about whether many creative activities could occur in one workplace. It was observed in the thesis' ethnography that many of these activities might clash and inhibit the undertaking of at least one, if not all, of these activities. Notable clashes include noise generation and the different kinds of environments needed for work. Some of these observations cannot easily be expressed clearly in words and that is why I wanted to experiment with alternative methods of data collection and delivery.

Included in this thesis is a DVD. It contains three short clips and an approximately 11 minute movie. The main purpose of these clips is to illustrate how different environments can be found in different locations. The movies are listed in appendix one. For those who do not have the DVD, appendix one also provides YouTube links to the movie and three clips.

Appendix two is a list of figure numbers.

Appendix three provides additional practical information about the processes that transform masses of data collected in the fieldwork into an ethnographic narrative. These processes are known as 'coding', 'memoing' and 'sorting'. This section was not integrated with the main methodology section because it does not provide much academic debate. Yet, it should be included in the thesis as it is a practical text that could help future researchers in reproducing this study's methodological framework.

Appendix four gives information about ethics when producing this thesis.

## The methodology

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### Using qualitative over quantitative method of research

Like many fellow academics and practitioners who are interested in creative-led development, I am interested in examining the drivers of creativity and in understanding to what extent creatives' actions are related to specific places. However, unlike many other researchers I personally do not believe we can have a full understanding of all the creative activities and their use of space and place<sup>17</sup> on the basis of quantitative research (Bernard, 2011).

From my experience when I was consulting and working with planners, the use of 'hard' quantitative research methodologies that are based on data collected, often in the form of numbers, graphs and maps, and indicators is still the best way of presenting data with planning practitioners. Clara Greed (1994) has indicated that planners often ask themselves if apparently 'social', 'soft', qualitative methodology can also be applied to 'hard' spatial or quantitative issues. She answered that it complements, not competes with, the quantitative methodology. Because of time limitations and that I feel I am more skilled with collecting and processing an array of qualitative data than working with quantitative research methods, I have chosen to focus particularly on gathering qualitative data for this thesis. However, I hope quantitative data will be used to complement future studies on the interaction between the 'culture cycle' (UNESCO, 2013) and the build environment.

This thesis is a comparative ethnography that informs planners how creative people residing in cities work as part of the globalised 'creative ecosystem'. The ethnography has been produced through on-site fieldwork that was directed by the theoretical considerations as defined in the literature review. The data collected in the fieldwork are primarily qualitative and ethnographic, gathered through a combination of sensory,<sup>18</sup> shadowing<sup>19</sup>, and single-sited and multi-sited comparative ethnographic methods. All these methods are part of the

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<sup>17</sup> This statement was backed up by the sudden reluctance in providing information by many research subjects once they discovered that I am a planner interested in the cultural and creative industry. Such reluctance or hesitance or/and sometimes hostility towards planners is well acknowledged by some informants. Since there are some data missing or unavailable, the complete statistical indicators will not be available for a good understanding of the activities and spatial requirements of creatives when carrying out research based on qualitative and quantitative approaches as described by Bernard. During my field studies, I have anticipated some of these scenarios and, in order to extract as much information as possible from respondents, various means have been tried, including the use of collaborators as representative. See the following sections in the methodology section for details.

<sup>18</sup> Please note the following restrictions when recording data for sensory ethnography. First, touch and smell data were hard to record and translate to a PhD thesis. Secondly, I was recording images with a Leica D-LUX 3 camera and Sony Ericsson K770 mobile phone; both instruments did not capture images well in the dark.

<sup>19</sup> See Czarniawska (2007) and McDonald (2005) for more details.

toolbox of what we generally call participant observation (more detail later in this section).

### Planning, cities and ethnography

Not only is ethnography orientated towards interpretation; its characteristic of 'thick description'<sup>20</sup> is inherently constructivist in nature (Geertz, 1973). However, ethnography also "sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants" (Charmaz, 2006, p.130). This can be useful data for planners when understanding the local cultural context, which is an issue in this thesis. From my own experience and that of my peers, planning practitioners may have a preference to be informed with 'hard' data. However, a colleague from my department at my university believes we are more pragmatic and can use ethnography when making planning decisions: "us [we] planners are post-positivists in that we like basing our judgements on objective units and numbers, but we are also pragmatic and use more value-driven methods if the results deliver logical arguments that ideally produce universal conditionals" (private conversation in October 2012).

Ethnographies have been traditionally written by anthropologists based largely on research in rural settings (Bălăşescu, 2007; Crang, 2011; Duijzings, 2011). However, some ethnographic researchers have attempted to adjust the method to fit with contemporary contexts and concerns such as in urban environments.<sup>21</sup> Arguably, the most famous ethnography of that kind is Jane Jacobs' (1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*,<sup>22</sup> where she frequently cites the urban environment of Greenwich Village in New York in explaining how people inhabit urban spaces. Most planning practitioners do not produce ethnographies. Although the urban designers Jan Gehl and William H. Whyte<sup>23</sup> did not produce ethnographies, they used observations as an important tool for research. They recorded direct observation of people's behaviour in urban settings, which helped them design public spaces and buildings.

Ethnography is also gaining acceptance by other academic disciplines like planning. Greed (1994) claimed that by the early-mid 1990s, ethnography in UK urban planning "was accepted increasingly within the world of post-structuralist urban sociology, and thus potentially within town planning itself" (p. 125). A decade later Rist (2000) and Maginn (2007) are still trying to make a case for

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<sup>20</sup> A 'thick description' is a qualitative research writing style. It observes human behaviour and explains it with its context, such that the behaviour becomes meaningful to an outsider (Geertz, 1973).

<sup>21</sup> Such as cities (Duijzings, 2011) and globalisation (Marcus G, 1995). However, most of these ethnographies are done by anthropologists and restricted to buildings, institutions or specific neighbourhoods (Maginn, 2007).

<sup>22</sup> Strictly speaking, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* is not an ethnographic text.

<sup>23</sup> See Gehl & Gemzoe (2004) and Whyte (1988) for examples of their work using direct observations.

ethnography; in the capacity of assisting public-participation and policymaking. Maginn (2007) believes that “policymakers often set up local partnerships with insufficient knowledge of the ‘culture’ (i.e., structure, processes, practices, relations and agents) of the neighbourhoods and communities they seek to regenerate and involve in decision-making” (pp. 25 & 33), believing that ethnography is more than capable of producing general policy-relevant data.

Handwerker (2001) points out that cities are a series of connected spaces that host overlapping sets of cultures. He then cites the anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor’s 1871 work, *Primitive Culture*<sup>24</sup>, when defining culture. Tylor (1871) emphasised the need to understand common cognition, emotion, and behaviour because they lead to patterns of networks and social interaction. Ethnographies may highlight common cognitions, emotions, and behaviours.

In this context, spaces may be linked by neighbouring spaces; however, people can be linked with many other spaces over a greater distance. The connections depend on networks of ‘flows’ (Simmel, 1990), ‘scapes’ (Appadurai, 1996), and ‘diaspora space’ (Brah, 1996). Gupta & Ferguson (1997) and Kokot (2007) suggest that a comparative and multi-sited approach is one way of addressing these contemporary urban links, networks, diasporas and flows.

According to Marcus (1995), Katz (1997) and Pink (2006), ethnographies using multiple site fieldwork are designed to examine the linkage and circulation of similar cultural meanings, objects and identities in different times and spaces. Multiple site fieldwork shows the relevance of findings beyond the local context. As George Marcus<sup>25</sup> has indicated, to base research “around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites” (Marcus G, 1995, p. 105). This is significant as people and cultures are becoming more interconnected at a global level. I believe that in my case there is a need to study and compare different sites to enable the revelation of a fuller or the whole story of the cultural and creative industries in Manchester and Brno. As Crang (2011) said: “place matters, but they are not fixed and given” (p. 36). In other words, any research on dynamic spaces, such as cities and segments of it, must acknowledge the impact of multiple spaces, places or networks; hence my rationale to use of multiple site fieldwork.

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<sup>24</sup> “[culture containing] two largely overlooked and undervalued implications: (1) the culture that specific people use to live their lives constitutes an evolving configuration of cognition, emotion, and behavior unique to themselves, and (2) a culture consists of an evolving configuration of cognition, emotion, and behaviour at the intersection of individually unique cultural sets [...] We thus need to pay attention to details bearing on the social distribution of cognition, emotion, and behaviour and ask pointed questions about the patterns, networks, and character of social interaction through which culture evolves, locally, regionally, and globally” (Handwerker, 2001, p.10-11).

<sup>25</sup> One of the first to develop the concept and method of multi-sited ethnography.

This thesis suggests certain communities (such as the *creatives* in this study) may dominate certain areas of an environment such as the urban one. Ethnography is a useful tool to attaining a good understanding of such communities in a city, which in turn could help us in understanding if there are perhaps different 'cultural tribes' in such an environment. Moreover, not only is it possible to locate these tribes within parts of a city, but also show how and where they are linked globally. Ethnography can be used to examine sources of intracultural and intercultural variations within a city (Handwerker, 2001).

As a result, a more encompassing or universal phenomenon of creatives' work patterns in the cultural and creative industries may be coded then deciphered; additionally, it has added value in that a comparative ethnography also produces a supplementary understanding to how the phenomenon fits within a local context (Eriksen, 2010; Thomas & James, 2006). This newly available set of social, cultural and spatial indicators will please many of us planners.

#### **Ethnography comparing Manchester and Brno's cultural and creative industries**

Ethnography should not only record physical manifestations of urban communities and cultures but also identify, describe and explain why certain cultural phenomena occur, for instance, alcohol consumption in a particular community such as the ones I am interested in. Such banal traits may seem trivial, but could at the same time be important to understanding why common creative-orientated planning tools such as live/work units may enhance a local cultural and creative industry in one country but erode it in another.

Contemporary ethnographic methods are useful in scrutinising the influence of different habitual traits and describing different aspects of the cultural and creative industries. Methods, like multi-sited<sup>26</sup> and sensory ethnographies can be used to analyse the process and interactions needed to deliver creative and cultural products (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). Examples are Hesmondhalgh & Baker's study of the making of a game show (2008) and McIntyre's study on song writing (2008). We will discuss sensory ethnography in a later section of this chapter.

A critique of multi-sited ethnography is that the method tries to cover too much ground and can lead to a lack of depth, only producing 'thin' descriptions of several places (Falzon & Hall, 2011). Geertz (1973) proclaims that 'depth' is unquestionably one of ethnography's richest offerings. Marcus (2011) refuted the critics indicating that the accumulation of short studies in different sites makes for a long one and includes aspects of paths and nodes that are

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<sup>26</sup> However, some have argued that multi-sited ethnography is not a new fieldwork method (Candea, 2007).

essential to understanding the world system (see also Sanjek, 1990). By employing George Marcus' multi-sited ethnography method, ethnography may allow us for instance, to research the 'commodity chains' of art and aesthetics, as it is not bound to one site (Marcus, 1995; Marcus & Mayers, 1995). Collecting a detailed record of one site can only provide part of the story; Eriksen's 2010 book *Small Places, Large Issues: An Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology* has indicated how indeed multi-sited and serial ethnographies can highlight universal urban patterns.

This thesis is designed as a springboard for future ethnographies researching into the spaces, places and networks of local cultural and creative industries. The research will be restricted to two case studies: Manchester in England and Brno in the Czech Republic. I decided to study these cities to balance the previous research bias (when this thesis was being produced) towards more established creative cities like London and New York (Hall P., 1998).

Making a comparative study allows for two outcomes: first, it allows the reporting of similarities and distinctive differences in spatial, locational and network patterns of creative activities in 'second order cities' from different parts of Europe. In effect, this study will therefore be able to pinpoint the emergence of shared patterns within the complex global 'creative ecosystem'. Secondly, it will highlight how local, regional and/or national influences may alter Manchester and Brno creatives' approach to work. I imagine that there could be slight alterations of patterns caused by the different economic and political context and trajectories that all converge towards the ideal of the entrepreneurial city (see chapter five). The local alterations and adaptations could be important aspects of Manchester and/or Brno's cultural and creative industries trying to make a mark in the global creative ecosystem.

These types of multiple-site ethnographic research not only address the complexities of cities, especially in the times of increasingly important global systems for cultural and creative industries, but also help analyse the fluidity of culture. Comparative ethnography can also be used to show patterns, similarities and differences of process and phenomena of two relatively unconnected sites. Jeffrey J Sallaz illustrated this in his 2008 study of the gambling industry in America and South Africa. The study of these distinct sites<sup>27</sup> brings to the surface both the profound differences and also highlights the similarities and common variables. Manchester and Brno, located in different (and historically juxtaposed) parts of Europe, were chosen to highlight the different and similar patterns and mechanisms within the European cultural and creative industries. Academic comparative research of England-Czech Republic cultural and creative industries is unique.

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<sup>27</sup> The sites should be different but not too extreme.

### Preparing for and getting help during the fieldwork

Doing ethnographic fieldwork is not as simple as just entering the field, recording data, and leaving the field. As we have already hinted, gaining trust and understanding in the fieldwork sites are essential when making ‘thick’ descriptions. Therefore, it is always important to do some preparatory work<sup>28</sup>, which is: familiarising oneself to the city, finding potential sites within it, and starting the ‘access-negotiation process’ with potential informants (McDonald, 2005).

Being born in England and making annual visits to Stockport<sup>29</sup> meant I had little problem in conditioning myself into the Manchester context. I had to make more effort in the case of Brno: I went to Czech classes and Brno Summer Schools for two years prior to the Brno fieldwork. The informants were found at conferences and during scoping studies.

In addition to preparing the case studies, I had to find places in Manchester and Brno that could be deemed as a ‘creative area’. This was not easy. In fact, my experience showed that the typically acknowledged ‘creative areas’ by many planning practitioners were not valid.<sup>30</sup> The scepticism towards the clustering hypothesis meant that I had to rediscover the potential location of creative activities in Manchester and Brno. It appeared that if concentrations of creative activities existed at all, they had to be found at a small scale and located in individual units or within a particular building. All these places were behind closed doors and I could only gain knowledge of them through individuals.

In short, creative actors are spread over a city, with certain groups having a tendency to physically cluster during some activities. This complicated the fieldwork, which meant that I needed to invest time during several scoping studies and virtual communications to find and gain the trust of key personnel to enter into these closed worlds. These key people are as follows:

*Gatekeepers:* They are people who helped me to enter social circles of interest. They were often people with high social status<sup>31</sup>. To steer my findings to those residing in the cities, I decided to find ‘gatekeepers’ for my study. These people must have an active role in their city’s cultural life; thus, possessing excellent knowledge of local creative people. In my case, they were either well-known

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<sup>28</sup> Such as spending time in the field before the fieldwork will help me to normalise the new way of life.

<sup>29</sup> Stockport is part of Greater Manchester. When visiting my family in Stockport, I often went to the City of Manchester.

<sup>30</sup> I spent the scoping studies by walking around areas with high concentration of industrial units and immigrants, which is the presumed locations for ‘creative clusters’, and found little evidence of urban spatial practices of creative people. See the preface and chapter two for more information.

<sup>31</sup> For example people know them well and well-connected to people.



creatives or venue owners living in Manchester and Brno. I met them from attending their events, through chance meetings<sup>32</sup> or through networks.

*Key informants:* They were individuals or groups who I consistently turned to because of their detailed knowledge of people, places and events of interest. Sometimes gatekeepers are also key informants. In my case, two of them were both. I found four key informants,<sup>33</sup> during my scoping studies; two from each city. I was introduced to those from Brno through academic peers during a conference on Central and Eastern Europe and a conference in Bratislava. I had a few informants during the scoping study, but most of these contacts were lost when I was back in London. At the time, I had not grasped the need to maintain contact with informants. Those two that I had kept in touch with were interested in English culture and wondered why a non-Slav from London wants to research Brno<sup>34</sup>. They were the ones who maintained the e-mail and text message exchanges with me.

The approach to finding the Manchester key informants was different from that in the Brno case. Ironically, they were harder to find, despite my ties to Greater Manchester and London creative networks. Also, no one in creative-related conferences offered me their Manchester contacts. Instead, the Manchester key informants were found by 'premeditated chance encounters'. After failing to strike a relationship with anyone in bars, pubs, and cafés within Manchester's 'creative quarters', such as the Northern Quarter (Champion, 2010), I decided to do Internet research on Manchester studio, 'creative areas', and 'alternative areas'. I found the postal and e-mail addresses of these places, however, few responded to my e-mails. This approach was equally unproductive when applied to Brno. Therefore, I decided to loiter around some of the places and talk to people entering them. This last drastic action allowed me to have long conversations about my research interest with potential informants and had the benefit of averting their presumption that I, as a planner, was researching

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<sup>32</sup> Such as loitering around the street or cafés and bars.

<sup>33</sup> A venue owner, a socialite well-known in various art circles in the city, an artist and girlfriend of a venue manager, and an artist.

<sup>34</sup> Language is an important factor when choosing sites in multi-sited ethnography (Falzon & Hall, 2011). This is why most researchers are in monolingual contexts (i.e., Anglo-American). However, my interest in Europe means that it needs to understand language as a factor. Before the Brno fieldwork, I took two years of Czech classes. However, there were still language barriers between myself and some local people, which hindered trust and subsequently prevented the development of a fruitful researcher-informant relationship. However, even with language barriers, there are some unusual scenarios that may help to gain, e.g., respect and trust, by demonstrating one's solidarity with other people including the informants. This story has been reported by the (casino) gaming ethnographer and sociologist Jeffrey Sallaz in his paper (2008) that includes the ethnographic study of the anthropologist Clifford Geertz in Bali, Indonesia, on his participation in cockfighting (illegal gambling) with the local villagers by running with them to avoid being caught by the police (he could have shown his government-issued papers to save the hassle).

creative-led gentrification. Similarly, I had a better understanding of their work and was driven to keep in touch with them.

*Other informants:* They are the other people whom I met at various occasions from whom I extracted data and information for this thesis. Since people are free to go in and out of the city, there is no doubt that I was interacting and observing creative people not only from the Manchester and Brno metropolitan areas. Still, this thesis prioritises findings on local people.

There were also those who assisted me whilst in the field - I call them *research assistants* in this thesis. My definition of research assistants is not in the traditional sense of people doing background work for the researcher. Many of them assisted me during fieldwork by keeping me motivated; for example, keeping me company during numerous boring and lonely periods of the research. Some research assistants were useful for finding or explaining data that could not be done by myself: there were times when they could go to places, ask questions, and have access to observations and knowledge that were unattainable to me for various reasons because “every person brings a distinctive set of biases to the questions he or she asks and the observations he or she makes” (Handwerker, 2001, p. 253). Using research assistants could help reduce my research bias. They were not officially working with me in the field, nor were they paid for information, but I did sometimes offer to buy them food and drinks or got them into events for free. I had many research assistants in Brno. Many of them were Czechs and foreign students who I met in the language summer school or ERASMUS events. The Manchester research assistants were my cousins and students who I had met in various pubs around Manchester.

#### **Recurring scenarios during the fieldwork**

Falzon & Hall (2011) recommend that research should be in the field (a city in my case) for at least seven months. My fieldwork in both cities was about seven months long in each case: Brno (August 2008 to March 2009) was the first fieldwork, followed by a month reflection time in London, and then the Manchester fieldwork (April 2009 to November 2009). The timeframe of both fieldworks allowed me time to identify the different 'tribes' (particular creative communities) through distinguishable behavioural and cognitive traits (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994; Handwerker, 2001; Goulding, 2005).

As the section title suggests, the complexity of producing an ethnography of cities means that it is not only important to stay in the field for a long period,<sup>35</sup> but also to move away from a traditional method of long sustained participant observation of one set of people/community at one locality. Instead, it is the case that this study employs numerous short seemingly fragmented participant observations. This was to help combat the concerns expressed by some academics of making ethnographies in cities, (Duijzings, 2011 as this type of fieldwork is able to cope with a city's dynamism and multiple cultural layers. In my case the ethnographic fieldwork strategies of 'following'/'shadowing' (Czarniawska, 2007; McDonald, 2005; Marcus G., 1995); 'quick ethnography' (Handwerker, 2001); 'sensory ethnography'<sup>36</sup> (Pink, 2009); and 'multi-sited ethnography' (Marcus G, 1995) were all useful as short, intensive fieldwork methods.

It is also important to note that the long-term ethnography need not mean staying in the field for the whole period. I followed Emerson, Fretz & Shaw's (1995) recommendation of taking breaks during the fieldwork periods. I visited London and Prague several times to attend gigs, and made a trip to several cities in Tanzania (October 2008). The breaks were primarily used to prevent 'going native' – where the researcher becomes too familiar with and oblivious to significant traits and events, which can be prevented by temporary leaving and making trips outside the field; regaining some distance from the study area, but also to strengthen friendship with informants (sometimes I went to other cities with my informants). It had another indirect benefit: visiting other places exposed me to behaviours of creative people in different contexts. It was useful in informing me of new potential observations in the field. For example, I asked a Tanzanian artist why many of his peers are painting with acrylic paints, to which he responded that that is the only type of paint the local art shop sold. This led me to be more alert to Manchester and Brno artistic producers' preferred medium.

The fieldwork required me to be flexible and collect all sorts of data at various times of the day from different sets of people; there was little established routine during my fieldwork period. However, some days did have recurring scenarios (see below).

Brno:

- *Typical day in Brno 1* – centred on my contacts: meet one of two key informants in a café some time during the day. During the meeting, I also

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<sup>35</sup> The alternative is returning to the site whenever you need to collect data, similar to a fieldwork made from formal interviews. Long-term fieldwork has the benefit of using fallow time to build and maintain trust and make groundwork for contextual awareness.

<sup>36</sup> Sensory ethnography involves the use of image-recording equipment in providing descriptive snapshots. There will be more on that later in this section.

meet or was directed to roughly four to five other potential informants. I try to arrange follow-up meetings with key, existing or potential informants. Sometimes the meeting moves on to another place like another café or someone's home.

- *Typical day in Brno 2* – quiet day: I code, sort and write memos if there is no planned activity during the day. Afterwards, I go to the city centre or to well-known creative-orientated venues and 'come across' several more informants. I sometimes stop and talk to them, but mostly send gestures of acknowledgement.
- *Typical day in Brno 3* – going out of Brno with creatives: despite my fieldwork about creative activities in the city, I felt it was important to understand the reason that some activities cannot be achieved in Brno; by joining creatives on their trajectories outside the city. There, I meet other creatives and asked them if they had any other connections with other Brno creatives whom I may know.

#### Manchester:

- *Typical day in Manchester 1* – centred on my contacts: I look at creative events in Manchester and ask a couple of close informants (via text message or in person) if they will be attending any events. At a typical event or night-out, I meet on average of 10-30 informants – a third regular and two-thirds passing contacts – many times I move on to another place with a couple of my regular contacts.
- *Typical day in Manchester 2* – quiet day: as in Brno. I code, sort and write memos if there is no planned activity during the day. Afterwards, I either hang around the area where I am living, head to known creative-orientated areas or to the city centre. Again, I bump into at least three or more informants. Most of the time I stop and talk to them.
- *Typical day in Manchester 3* – living away from Islington Mill: I was living in Old Trafford and the Greater Manchester suburbs for the first and final months of the Manchester fieldwork period. This is because of renting issues at Islington Mill. I used this as a way to visit areas unfrequented by most creatives found in Islington Mill. Some days I meet a couple of new creatives; I approach random groups of people if I overhear or see something interesting such as people discussing a portfolio of pictures on the table.

A 'typical' day in Brno was different from that in Manchester. There were often more 'quiet days' during the Brno fieldwork than in Manchester. This could be for several reasons such as the seemingly fewer numbers of creative people in Brno than in Manchester; there were more events when creatives had a chance to informally network in Manchester than in Brno; or that I moved base three times during the Manchester fieldwork, which exposed me to a new environment and new people. Another significant difference between the two

fieldwork sites was that I followed Brno creatives outside the city. The main reason was that Brno creatives were constantly going to other cities, generally much more than their Manchester counterparts, so much so I felt it was important to understand their reasoning to perform activities outside Brno.

### **The scenes focused on this thesis**

For each fieldwork, I used two key informants and several gatekeepers. I relied heavily, but not exclusively, on an artist (who is a girlfriend of an owner of a Brno music venue) and a venue owner in Salford<sup>37</sup> as the basis for finding respondents and starting referral chains when applying the snowball sampling research technique (Goodman, 1961; Faugier & Sargeant, 1997). Snowball sampling is when an informant recommends or introduces me to those I might be interested in for my research; the newly acquainted informant informs me of their work activities and then carries on the process of recommending contacts. If I am not passed on to another informant, I ask the Brno artist and Salford venue owner for new contacts. This enabled me to record the creative network of a city, as well as identifying the spaces and places of creatives' activities. By default, I was usually directed to investigating a particular scene rather than observing all creative people in the city. This problem could have been dealt with by the use of quantitative methods, such as surveys (Bernard, 2011), but to carry out the procedure was not my preference and it was also not possible, as the perception of 'creative areas' had to be re-established (see page 20). The main scenes, or 'tribes' (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994), in this thesis are: 'New Media Art' (NMA) in Brno and 'Salford-City Centre West' (SCCW). The SCCW scene is my own creation: I had observed that some places in Salford's Chapel Street and the west side of Manchester City Centre, which are geographically next to each other, consisted of people with similar dress styles and music tastes. There had not been any branding of this combined area at the time of writing this thesis; SCCW was named by me to simplify the narrative of the ethnography.

NMA was at the time of the fieldwork the dominant art and music scene in Brno. It is concerned with electronic sound and vision, a by-product is the common type of accessories people wear, for example, rings made from keyboard keys. As we will see, like all recorded art scenes, it is not exclusive to Brno. My main informant of this scene teaches art at the Faculty of Fine Arts in the Brno University of Technology. She is originally from Slovakia and is also a key player in the Bratislava NMA scene. Consequently, there will be an inevitable connection between NMA in Brno and Slovakia. Almost all of my informants were university educated, the majority being Czechs or Slovaks. Not all

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<sup>37</sup> I felt that it was better to have people well linked to venues as key informants because I assume they would have good links with a variety of creative people.

speak English; many have lived abroad for at least one month – normally in Britain, Ireland, Scandinavia, North America, or neighbouring countries. At first, people started to stare at me when I walked into a place, not only because I look Asian but also because I dressed differently. Conversely, people became very responsive when I spoke to them. I did try to balance the informants' gender. However hard I tried, I was unable to sustain contact with those with folk and craft interests.<sup>38</sup> Even though I did initially have contact with an active member of the creative group, unfortunately no fruitful results were obtained. Since the process of introduction to other informants and further on could not be sustained, the snowball sampling technique could not be used to enable a study of this group (see also the '*participant observation*' section below and the corresponding footnotes).

SCCW is more synonymous with the DIY scenes, but with a Manchester twist. As with NMA, the scene deals with audio-visual arts, but also delves into performance and fashion. My main informant in Manchester studied fashion in Central St Martins, London, and had lived within Greater Manchester for about 20 years. The ages of the SCCW scene ranges from 18 to more than 50 years old, mostly university educated. People in the SCCW scene originated from all over the world and Britain, meaning they are of many creeds and race. However, most of my informants were white or Chinese. I cannot explain the absence of other races. The Chinese representation should not be seen as a reflection of Manchester creative profile, or from me being Chinese. My main informants are not Chinese. The presence of the Chinese Art Centre and the Chinese manager of Castlefield Gallery, an important venue for Manchester fine artists, could explain the high concentration of Chinese in the SCCW scene. Class and religion were never spoken off, and the gender mix was roughly 50%. I did not stand out as much as I did in Brno, although there was a time when there was a 'friendly Northern England, Southern England banter'.<sup>39</sup>

The other key informants were useful in informing me of, and helping me map, local activities that were not linked to the NMA and SCCW scenes. One was an art school graduate and another recently returned from America. Because of their weak ties to any local scene, they were actively looking for events and people they felt comfortable in mixing with. Many of my informants normally ask me to come along if they wanted to go somewhere. The informants had an important role in finding the similarities and differences of the NMA and SCCW scenes, in terms of population profile, location, and use of space, compared to the rest of their respective cities.

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<sup>38</sup> This was no different to my experience in New York.

<sup>39</sup> For example, I have had comments from people when I dressed like a 'Shoreditch Twat' (Hujic, 2006) or, as a Londoner, was the satirical focus on 4 May 2008, when Boris Johnson became the mayor of London.

I always tried my best to be situated in areas that appeared to have high levels of creative activities (creative-orientated shops, high-quality graffiti, etc.) or areas my informants directed me towards. My nocturnal activities were usually events or when my informants needed help. In theory, I never stopped making observations because I used the Internet and continued noting down my informants' activities and new contacts.

I met with informants from the NMA and SCCW almost every week for coffee or at an event. This is mostly when they would introduce me to other people. The number of SCCW informants increased dramatically when I lived and took part in meetings in one of the scene's hubs: Islington Mill. Having common interest and living in a Salford creative hub meant that I had richer data than in Brno, therefore, the imbalance of data between Manchester and Brno, with more data coming from Manchester in this thesis.

Moreover, as I have already mentioned, despite my best efforts to observe a wide range of creative actors in Manchester and Brno, my research was biased towards a particular scene in each city. Therefore, my research does not report on all the different communities in a society. Nevertheless, the decision to focus more on one scene in each city, instead of balancing observations of two cultures in one city allowed me to spend more time making 'thick' descriptions and deepen the observations of a particular network. Eriksen (2001) suggests that this is enough to make good qualitative comparative studies. Also, the following of creatives or the work activities of key hubs provided a framework, by which to narrow the number of promising paths I was required to follow to achieve a depth of study.

### **Participant observation**

Participant observation was the main tool used during the two fieldworks. It is when the researcher lives and participates in the community and laboriously describes the lives and behaviour of those observed. To add depth, the researcher must also reflect and record his own activities, circumstances, and emotional responses as these factors shape the process of observing and recording others' lives (Sanjek, 1990).

I did not always record data or collect artefacts whenever I went out of the city. The participant observation boundary was loosely set around the city's respective greater metropolitan area. This is especially relevant in the Manchester case because creative activities between the cities of Manchester, Stockport, Blackburn, and Salford are fluid. Creative activities in Greater Brno were more towards Brno city centre. There was a self-imposed restriction on doing participant observation outside the metropolitan areas because of time

and cost restrictions. Nevertheless, any important activities by informants outside the boundary was discussed and recorded.

Participant observation protocol is about developing a close understanding while being inside the field. Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) said that the objective of participant observation is ultimately to get close to those studied as a way of understanding what their experiences and activities mean to them. Normally these studies have an 'insider' perspective, i.e., based on participation of activities carried out by the people one observes. For example, I have taken part in meetings, had dinner, helped create artworks, made pottery, and attended events. I spent most of the fieldwork period hanging around with, or being within the vicinity of, artistic producers. I was lucky enough to live with important cultural gatekeepers in Manchester. This allowed me to record an 'insider's view' of what is happening in my field of study and what it is like to be part of the group. It is important to note that not all the observations were recorded and that some facts were altered in the ethnography, such as the exact age, for ethical reasons (see appendix four); however, these changes do not influence the thesis' research objective and key findings.

McDonald (2005) highlights two concerns related to the closeness with research subjects, one of which is the 'observer effect': where the subject changes their routine to make themselves more interesting, which is normally eradicated at the later stages of the study period. When potential informants first met me, the 'observer effect' was prominent. They either say what they think I want to hear or stay very quiet. Since my fieldwork involved a lot of participant observation in eating and drinking places, my data gathering vastly improved after an hour or two of alcohol consumption.

It remains important as part of participant observation to make observations as an 'outsider'. As, Goulding (2005) writes: "with ethnography, insider and outsider views combine to provide deeper insights than would be possible by the 'native' alone. This two-sided view produces a third dimension that rounds off the ethnographic picture, which is a theoretical explanation of the phenomena under study [e.g., issues associated with creative and cultural activities to be investigated in my thesis]" (p. 300). Participant observation as an outsider normally takes the form of 'passive observer'. Sometimes passive observation was forced upon me – like not being able to play on stage with a music group – but other times I chose not to participate.<sup>40</sup> In these cases, I found participants with greater willingness to go with me and update me about the event at a later date.

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<sup>40</sup> Normally, it was when I felt uncomfortable communicating Czech (I did not like people laughing at my accent), overusing substances, or was burnt-out from the previous day's activities.



Almost all informants' reactions and opinions were richer about an hour into an event. This is because the informant, both, or I were at best 'a little tipsy', which made us open to each other. At times there were problems in talking to some Brno informants because there seemed to be a social ritual of being invited to attend but then ignored during events, or the informants preferred to drink tea, coffee, or a soft drink and 'putting up a front' during one-to-one meetings.<sup>41</sup> This was eventually overcome in the later months when they got used to me 'hanging around'.

As hinted at with the case of the people with folk and craft interest, I could not affiliate with all creative people, which meant observations were limited. This was particularly the case with the 'literature subgroup' in both cases.<sup>42</sup> This is because I could not talk about their particular interest, which hinders the trust building that is needed for participatory observation (Falzon & Hall, 2011); which in turn prevented them from inviting me to participate in their activities or passing on new informants. Sometimes I dealt with this problem by sending a more empathic informant and he or she reported to me.

I would estimate over a hundred people were recorded in some shape or form in each city, mostly as notes from conversations or visual recordings during events or public places. No formal interviews were undertaken beyond the participant observation methods used in this thesis. Formal interviews would have required the creation of targeted questions from the beginning of the fieldwork, which was not possible, as key concerns and concepts did not emerge until the data of both fieldworks were collected, reflected and compared. Hypothetically, formal interviews after data analysis would have been possible; however, after at least a year after the fieldwork, it was difficult to reconnect with many of the respondents.<sup>43</sup>

### **Writing and recording techniques**

Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995) claimed that ethnographers must frequently choose between joining conversations in unfamiliar places and withdrawing to some more private place to write about these conversations and witnessed events. I tried to combine both.

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<sup>41</sup> This is not normal (see Hall T., 2003).

<sup>42</sup> My Czech was limited and I am dyslexic, which made reading unpleasurable and stressful.

<sup>43</sup> I went back to Manchester in April 2012 for an Islington Mill organized event. I contacted some of my informants from 2009 about reconnecting; only a few people replied. At the event, I did bump into some of my informants and spoke to a few of them; the conversations were not as deep or fruitful as it was in 2009. I have not been back to Brno since the fieldwork and have had no contact with past informants since 2010, when one informant was looking for a place to stay in London.

The field data collection techniques that I employed were in the form of note taking, audio/visual recording, informal conversations, document e-mails, Internet research, and collection of secondary data.

Notes to be taken were predominantly written on my mobile phone<sup>44</sup> and as still or moving images on my camera. At first, I made notes in diaries and notebooks, but then I started using the mobile phone and camera instead because I noticed that people were looking at me when I take a pen and paper out of my bag. Contemporary society seems to accept people constantly looking at their phone and taking pictures, even when being spoken to.

I took notes of significant observations and events, self-reflections (Corbin, 1998), and what people said to me.<sup>45</sup> Most things recorded in the first couple of months in the fieldwork were mundane and sometimes irrelevant to this thesis, then, the observations became more focused and rationalised as the time went by because of increased reflection and filtering periods.

With the influence of technological advance and accessibility of recording and storage equipment, there is a case to be made for new ethnographic techniques in creative activities. Capturing still and moving images (and to a certain extent sound) of the urban environment, setting or spaces within buildings can be strong multi-sensory tools in capturing the 'optical unconscious' (Benjamin, 1931); the subtle actions and interactions that are difficult to capture otherwise. These records will capture more details than any text can ever manage. Instant recordings of "tiny spark of contingency of the Here and Now" (Benjamin, 1931, p. 58) allowed the researcher to record and analyse more sites; what is more the relative objectiveness of taking an image could allow the principal investigator to see what the research assistant did without being there; also it can cope with the quick pace and fluidity of the urban environment (Duijzings, 2011). This reduces the pitfalls and problems of comparative ethnography in cities.

Since I am interested in the space and place issues of the cultural and creative industries, I try to take pictures of the surroundings, people in rooms, or to take notes on people when they are at various places. It was easier to take pictures rather than trying to describe spatial interactions in words as I was note-taking with my mobile phone. Pictures of artefacts or other details were taken when they were pointed out by someone or constantly spoken about. Videos were normally panned across spaces or surroundings, or to show movement and the difference in atmosphere from one room to another. Most of the secondary literature and artefacts were written materials related to events or a venue. All were scanned, dated, and sorted into the relevant files that are labelled by

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<sup>44</sup> Written as a text message and saved as a draft.

<sup>45</sup> Such as about life histories, daily routine, anything new, people's current interests and activities, and explanations and theories. I provided context of the conversation when possible.

month and year. Goulding (2005) noted that photographs and other pictorial records reveal new information “based on intense introspection and reflection” (p. 300).

MacDougall (1998) believes that recording moving images has the added benefit of logging the continual interaction between the people in front and behind the camera, which is ‘inherently reflexive’. Besides, I found continuous recordings were useful in registering previously unnoticed moments or events. For example, I wanted to record the movement from one room to another; it was only a year later when revisiting the footage that I noticed something at the periphery of the video, not the people I was focusing the recording on at the time, was in fact the most interesting incident of the movie. The visual records that I made during the fieldworks have the added benefit of reducing the time of trawling through masses of written data, which requires more attention (Forsblad, 1984; McDonald, 2005). Furthermore, the data can be a mnemonic aid to provoke new questions and prompt different angles of reassessing a place or event as the ethnography is further ‘coded’<sup>46</sup> (Benjamin, 1931; Pink, 2009).

The related notes and images were written as memos in a series of Word documents (compiled as a monthly diary) and iPhoto respectively (the reason and context were noted on the information section of each photograph). This was done almost every night or the following mornings. More detailed information of my coding and memoing methods can be found on ‘*appendix three: codes, memos and sorting*’.

Images need not only be used for data recording, they can also be used in the ethnography. Pink (2009) reflects on how images should be used in combination with text in the ethnography: “in any project a researcher should attend not only to the internal ‘meanings’ of an image but to how the image was produced and how it is made meaningful by its viewers” (Pink, 2006, p. 29). Therefore, the thesis’ ethnography will at times use written analysis as a complimentary tool to contextualise and reflect upon content of visual message(s). This informs the reader of the subjectivity of why an image is taken (Tuan, 1977; Rose, 2001). Sarah Pink added that this method of recording, called ‘sensory ethnography’, helps report on cultural understanding in the contemporary cities. Like George Marcus (1995), Pink (2006) argued that today’s indefiniteness and disparity of place should be seen as a series of connected events, activity, or encounter. All moments, events, and locations with a similar subject matter (e.g., when networking occurs) would be compared and related to each other during the sorting phase of the PhD. In that way, patterns may be discovered.

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<sup>46</sup> See ‘Appendix 3: Codes, Memos and Sorting’ for more details on coding with visual data.

An ethnography is often written in the ‘ethnographic present’ when reporting about the fieldwork, which means writing in the present tense instead of the past tense. It is quite common to use the present tense to make the ethnography more lively and direct. However, I have chosen to write the ethnography mostly in the past tense, so to be more in line with a Planning Studies doctoral thesis.

### **The contribution**

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The inquiries during the Manchester and Brno fieldworks are based on networks, more specifically: investigation of whom are the key people involved in Manchester or Brno cultural and creative industries, and how they are linked. What are the different creative work activities, and how could they be affected by a creative’s network? Moreover, how are spaces and places (including outside Manchester and Brno) linked, and how do they aid networking in the cultural and creative industries. The exploration of the practical use, localisation (even manifestation) and formation of network nodes could potentially be a huge contribution to planning theorists and practitioners interested in the cultural and creative industries. This could be in three ways:

First, the empirical uniqueness of comparing Manchester with a Central Eastern European city and innovative use of ethnography when studying the relationship between people and space will provide better insight into details and limitations to creative activities in a city and, how it relates to the global cultural and creative industries. This thesis identifies some patterns, but does not claim to be an authority on them. Nevertheless, this may allow place-making practitioners to design a creative-led policy fitting with their city’s specific situation.

Secondly, as I have already hinted, I have experience in both the creation and consumption sides of artistic production. An insight of the former is generally a rare possession for many of my academic and planning peers. Being able to understand and rationalise patterns in the localisation nodes of creative people and activities network, will help the appreciation of the rationale for clustering certain activities. Similarly, it will inform us of an area/city’s limitations in supporting all creative activities, hence questioning the seemingly over-emphasis on ‘absolute clustering of a creative area’.

Thirdly, with the recent global recession, cultural funding (especially for supporting creative activities) has been reduced. Findings from this thesis will allow urban authorities and other stakeholders to efficiently pinpoint, support, and stimulate the ‘supporting mechanisms’ used by a broad range of creatives’ activities; and by using limited funds more efficiently to the benefit of the city.

This research is also timely because social and virtual networking in the cultural and creative industries is gaining significance within Europe. This is demonstrated with the delivery of the *Creative Europe* programme (European Commission, 2012) and the *Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries* Green Paper (European Commission, 2010). The European initiatives' additional funding towards culture compensates to some extent for national trends of cuts to culture funding. Both papers pay attention on the role of 'incubators' and connecting creative actors with other European contemporaries. This research would hopefully contribute to this desire, and subsequently assist in an efficient and competitive pan-European cultural and creative industry.

## Part 2: Literature Review

### Chapter 1: Creative people

Creative and culture-led policies (especially planning and some other public policies) are widely accepted as effective economic tools in national and regional development (European Commission, 2010). Yet, as we will see in this section, there are on-going debates on what these policies should aim towards. As highlighted in the following chapter, policies have a tendency to echo Richard Florida's approach of a geographic clustering of the 'Creative Class' and activities (Florida, 2002). Before the discussion of creative-led policies, we will look at the concept of 'creative classes' and question if the term is fit-for-purpose in the context where it is used. On the basis of this discussion I will suggest an alternative and more precise term: 'creatives'.

Before any discussion on the multifaceted subject of this thesis, it is fundamental to understand the main players of this research: creative people. The many takes (e.g., actions or/and behaviours) and discourses of their definition may influence how we observe their urban spatial practices. This is imperative to understand my stance on the subject.

The purpose of this section is to find and justify the main objective of the study, and to establish a research approach to the people and their practices. By doing this, it will shape the achievement of the main aim of this thesis: observing potential broad patterns in urban spatial practices and their effects on creative actors.

#### Questioning the Creative Class

For many years, I have been interested in observing the relationship between creativity, culture and the urban environment. Noticeably, interest in this subject appears to have increased since the early 2000s. Almost all conversations or articles that I have encountered since the early years of the present century mention Richard Florida's Creative Class at least once.

Some of my peers have, in fact, admitted it to me that they have not read *The Rise of The Creative Class* (Florida, 2002). However, that does not stop them from forming an opinion of creative-led development based on hearsay knowledge.

This thesis is not an attack on Florida's work, which seems to be a significant tool for planning and development. Consequentially, it is appropriate to scrutinise his term of 'Creative Class' for clarification. We will begin by looking at the grouping of creative people as a 'class'.

Contemporary discourse on 'class' originated from the French Enlightenment (Calvert, 1982), but the term was given its most famous treatment in Marx's publication, the 'Communist Manifesto' (Marx & Engels, 1848). This examined the dissonance between economic production and political interests, critiquing the concept of class structure as conflicting interests between those with labour power, the owners of capital, and landowners.

However, during his analysis of French peasants in the 19th Century, Marx suggested that one must be careful when categorising people into a class. These people may live in similar conditions to each other, and yet they have varying, and self-sufficient, modes of production, which provide little evidence of division of labour. This led to a lack in communication and weak common interests, isolating one lot of the peasant community from another (Marx, 1852). Florida's Creative Class "do not see themselves as a unique social grouping, [though] they actually share many similar tastes, desires and preferences" (Florida, 2002, p. 68). Marx believed it was not possible for such a weak grouping to constitute a class in that they do not have the capability of setting up political organisations, or representing a collective interest or consciousness, in response to a common political or economic situation.

There is little evidence of a mass action/movement amongst the Creative Class, even during the global trends in cuts to cultural funding. Hypothetically speaking, amateur photographers and well-known photographers in a given area have different social standing and wealth, and are unlikely to unite in ideology, mode of production, and/or habitual and consumption patterns. Furthermore, they lack common (and often have conflicting) interests, which influence group interactions and locational divergence, meaning that they cannot be considered as a class in the Marxist sense. Many writers have found that shared interests and collective consciousness are absent among many other groups in society (Giddens, 1979; Massey, 1984; Urry, 1981). In other words, Florida's Creative Class should be considered as a broad grouping of differing categories and not as a class within itself. The confusion with the use of 'class' could be from mistranslation (Calvert, 1982; Ossowski, 1963) and longitudinal development of this term (Florida, 2002).

Another definition of 'class' comes from Max Weber. His definition reflects people's situation in a society, and is measured in terms of goods (property class), life condition (acquisition class), and satisfaction/frustration (social class). His subsequent study led to his influential three-component theory of stratification (Weber, 2001). Here he suggests that there is an interaction between 'class' (of the economic order), 'estate' (of social order), and 'parties' (of the distribution of power). Class is not the only component in influencing an individual's standing in society, and from this we can conclude that 'class' is not an appropriate term or interpretation for the grouping Florida refers to.

Concerning 'class' and 'estate' of Weber's three-component theory of stratification, Ossowski (1963) and Calvert (1982) warned of the words and definitions being lost in translation,<sup>47</sup> leading to interchangeable use of 'class' and 'estate' in social discourse. Moreover, in essence the word 'estate' has different meanings in German and in English. Hence, it is better to use the word 'status' when writing in English. Nevertheless, Richard Florida utilises the term 'class' as an all-encompassing economic group:

*"The main point I want to make here is that the basis of the Creative Class is economic. I define it as an economic class and argue that its economic function both underpins and informs its members' social, cultural and lifestyle choices." (Florida, 2002, p. 68)*

Florida rejected the traditional Marxist class categories because of today's progressive employer-employee relations and increasing fluidity of knowledge transfer from a broad-range of professions.<sup>48</sup> In essence, Florida's interpretation simplifies the complex and multifaceted dimensions of social classification to adopt: the 'Creative Class' (consisting of a 'Super-Creative Core' and 'Creative Professionals'), the 'Working Class', the 'Service Class', and 'Agriculture' [sic], as defined by their economic function. There is only high mobility within Florida's Creative Class, while a 'glass ceiling' is placed for the other classes. Figure 1 is a diagram that summarises those who are deemed to be part of Florida's Creative Class.

The suggestion of social mobility between the elite and other members of the Creative Class is debatable. Florida credited the idea to Paul Fussell's anti-class grouping called 'category X' or 'X people': incorrectly named 'X Class'.<sup>49</sup> (Florida, 2002, p. 67). He also placed more weight on the cultural dimension by suggesting that there is 'emerging coherence' in these people sharing similar desires, tastes, consumption and buying habits, social identity, and devotion to creative work. This idea of Florida is similar to Veblen's concept of the 'leisure class' (Veblen, 1899), by replacing the word 'leisure' with 'creative' and incorporating Fussell's observations of the X-class, as well as including young people devoted to art, writing and forms of creative work in combination to form his 'Creative Class'.

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<sup>47</sup> Weber's (2001) essay 'Class, Status and Party' was originally written in German, most subsequent studies on 'status' were in English.

<sup>48</sup> The idea of including any profession that uses someone to imaginatively manipulate knowledge (suggestion from Florida, 2002, includes legal and financial occupations) does not mean he or she is working in a cultural and creative industry. The majority follow routines and regular procedures in a non-creative way. If you are going to add bankers into a 'creative community' because there are some creative bankers, then why not bring in all occupations since all jobs can, in a sense, be done creatively.

<sup>49</sup> In fact Fussell wrote: "X" people are better conceived as belonging to a category than a class because you are not born an X person, as you are born and reared a prole [sic] or a middle." (Fussell, 1983, p. 179).



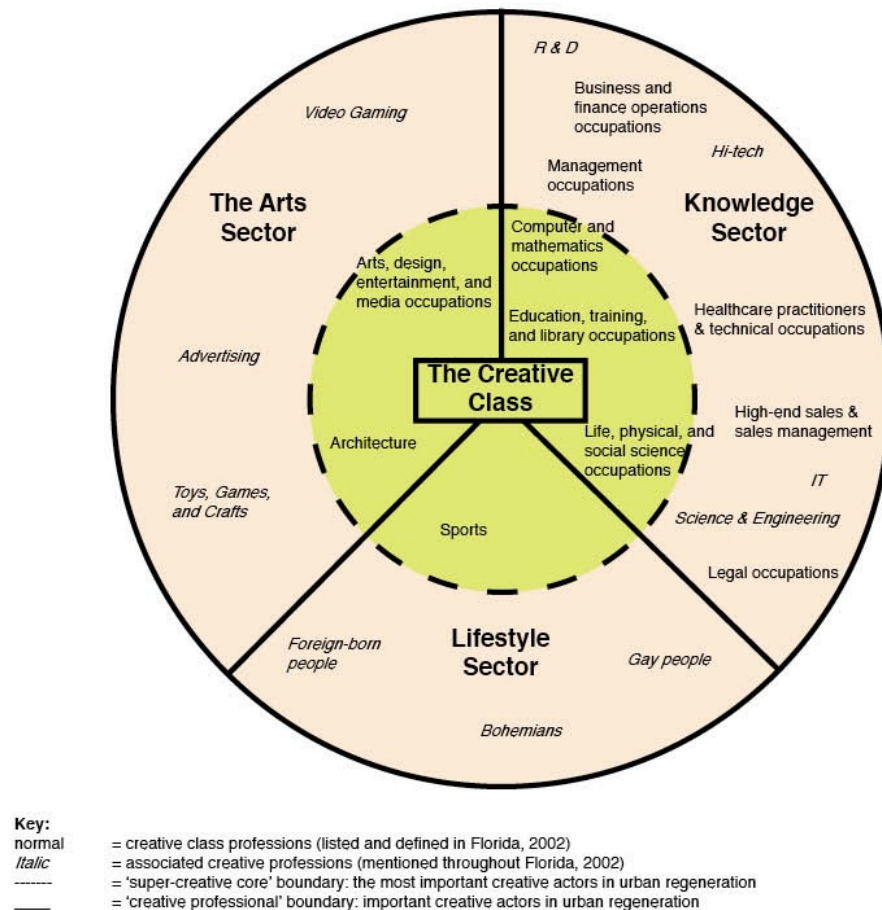


Figure 1: Diagram illustrating Creative Class; hinting that anyone is important in urban regeneration. The diagram was made by Aaron Mo and was developed from analysing the definition of the Creative Class given in chapter 4 and the appendix of *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida, 2002).

With regard to economic production, Florida believes that people within the Creative Class need not rely on people outside its class when producing work. They are a part of an exclusive group of people with varying modes of production, which provide little evidence of division of labour. This self-sufficiency is similar to Marx's study of French peasants in the 19th Century, which considered that the observed lack of dependence on each other or other 'classes' was one of the main reasons that they were a group rather than a 'class'. Moreover, there is recognition that members of the said 'Creative Class' are found at all tiers of society and have no concept of collective, class identity, nor share common concerns (Florida, 2002; Markusen, 2006). Essentially, creative people should not be grouped as a 'class', as it is both misleading and inaccurate.

### Stratification of consumption

This thesis acknowledges that the concept of class is ever evolving and becoming more complex, which means Florida's (2002) inclusion of the cultural dimension when observing the phenomenon is valid. However, the vagueness and general 'anti-class' scope of Florida's discourse is hard to reconcile with the widely held and more comprehensive interpretations of 'class' (DeFazio, 2002; Ban, Hansen & Huggins, 2003; Peck, 2005; Ponzini & Rossi, 2010).

If we relate spatial patterns to consumption, then we see that not all members of the Creative Class live or shop in the same area. This is particularly important for urban regeneration, as members of this so-called class are from such a broad social spectrum that they could equally play the role of gentrifier, the gentrified, or even gentrifying mercenaries (who are deliberately introduced to an area to catalyse gentrification). Policies adopting this broad understanding of social class and a blurring between identity, production, and property<sup>50</sup> have indirectly led to creative-led gentrification because policies aim to group the knowledge workers so that they are easier to manage and fit the provision of smaller units. Therefore, it is important to look at the makeup of various creative communities, and their respective positions within a society. In doing so, we observe the broad divergence of spatial and cultural consumption within the Creative Class, which runs contrary to the defining characteristics of 'class'.

Giddens (1979), Massey (1984), and Urry (1981) believed that spatial separation is a major feature of class differentiation. Whatever class someone fits into, a distinctive lifestyle, habits, behaviour, and traits are adopted as part of being members of a class. The underlining feature is that the economy influences wealth and employment, which in turn condition a person's position in society through life and relative standing in a society. Such spatial separation can therefore influence the level of social mobility. Socio-economic relations are spatially structured; aiding and/or inhibiting class interactions and the development of class cultures, and can motivate collective action in response to stratification of society.

Spatial separation of creative people within a city has been observed. However, it is unclear if this is because of class issues. There are observations that unrelated creative clusters within large cities exist because of genres (Hauge & Hracs, 2010; Currid, 2007). Differences in shared cognitive working patterns, aesthetic appreciation, and philosophy of art, shape these genres and scenes. In fact, O'Connor & Gu (2010) had observed that those in the cultural and creative industries might not identify themselves as working in such an industry. Some of them even go as far as refusing to recognise themselves as part of a creative economic sector.

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<sup>50</sup> Today, there is more emphasis on intellectual property, and less on landownership.

Creative scenes are the cultural output from the genre, which can be used as an identification of a place; for example, the 'ghetto' is often related to Hip Hop. Hauge and Hracs' (2010) paper on the indie scene in the Canadian cities of Halifax and Toronto suggested that it is not common for the members and consumers of certain scenes to interact with another scene in the same city, but more common to link-up with associated scenes in other cities and countries.

The wealth, distinctive approach and aesthetic taste of individual members of the Creative Class could be poles apart, to the degree that it would be meaningless to consider them as a class in the economic sense. As discussed below, groupings of creative actors are more validly defined by their choice of consumption, cognitive and occupational working behaviour.

### **Creatives in this study**

What Florida calls the Creative Class is broad and actually made up of individuals from multiple classes and social standings. For this reason, it was argued above that the concept of 'class' could not be applied here to creative people. Instead, this study prefers to use the collective term 'creatives' when describing creative actors. Whenever this thesis uses the term 'Creative Class', it is referring specifically to Florida's definition on figure 1.

Analysis of the study of the differences among creative people will go deeper than Florida's occupational categories listed in the appendix (Florida, 2002, p. 328). The initial category that this study is concerned with is professions associated with the arts and creative modes of production, as they are related strands to the creative communities' DNA (Mo, 2009a). Paul Fussell (1983) also noted the X people's tendency to fall into a particular profession, e.g., writers, because of their common way of working and outlook on the world. In short, creativity is more a predisposition of certain individuals rather than a trait of an economic function.

Failure to properly understand or consider the differing requirements, behaviours and interactions of different types of creatives can lead to policies and approaches having a more detrimental than positive impact. However, it is exactly the narrow focus of Florida's approach and the 'one-size-fits-all' solutions it proposes which garners support from Town Planners. The rest of this chapter will make observations on the spatial and geographical divergence among creatives, which shows why creative people should not be considered as a generic and homogeneous grouping.

### Creative subgroup and blurred edges

There have been many studies of creatives clustering, notably in the areas of Hoxton, East London (Green, 1999) and Lower East Side, Lower Manhattan in New York (Currid, 2007). Further still, findings from my own 2004 fieldwork in Lower East Side (New York) showed that creatives of similar modes of production have the tendency to be located in particular units with specific features and/or infrastructure or floors of a building. Figure 2 gives a brief overview of five different modes of production patterns, or subgroups, that many creatives fall into: fine art, plastic art, fashion, performance, and literature. The significance of the subgroups on space and place issues will be explained in chapter two.

Creatives' subgroups				
Fine art	Plastic art	Fashion	Performance	Literature
Painters Draftsmen Photographers Illustrators	Sculptors Ceramicists Installation artists	Clothes designers Accessories designers Shoe designers	Musicians Actors Dancers Conceptual artists film/video artists	Writers Poets

Figure 2: Overview of the different subgroups defined by modes of production found within each creative subgroup. The diagram is a simplified version of figure 3, which is a matrix produced from a series of interviews with New York City creatives in 2004 (Mo 2005a).

Creatives are not a closed group and their professional success depends on other agents, such as cultural facilitators, gatekeepers, tastemakers (Currid, 2007), students (Smith, 2005), and cultural consumers. These people are not working as creatives (i.e., are not making a living as an artist); however, many have worked, or have been trained as creatives. Due to their brief occupation as a creative, they are well connected with creative and innovative people and they may possess similar consumption patterns (Fussell, 1983; Hall P., 1998). Therefore, we must be aware that potentially important 'non-creatives'<sup>51</sup> which could also be called former creatives or semi-creatives could be important to this study. Nevertheless, this study will not focus on them specifically.

The concept of Wittgenstein's (2001) 'family resemblance' states that people cannot be easily isolated and compartmentalised because we have many

<sup>51</sup> Non-creatives will be generic name used to describe the blurred-edges of the study.

similarities and links to others. This creates 'blurred edges' of associate members when analysing a particular group. This is a useful conceptual tool in making links between and within the creatives' subgroups, as it allows us to look at these groups as having both similarities and differences, and as having unclear and blurred edges, bleeding into other categories.

The common associates at the 'blurred edges' are bohemians, students, venue managers, and technicians (Ley, 2003; Smith, 2002; Smith, 2005). The latter was illustrated in the work of Hague & Hracs, 2010, where they illustrated (possibly, unintentionally) that indie musicians need technical aid from fashion stylists and photographers to support a certain image as musicians. Indeed, it is often the case that technicians are also working as creatives. Currid (2007) has mentioned that technicians need not be creatives. Sound engineers could be one example. With regard to technicians, this thesis will observe those who the creatives have interaction with when seeking technical help. By doing so, this study will identify those who are the most influential members of the groups of creatives also those at the blurred edges of these groups and observe the role they play during the creatives' practices.

## Chapter 2: Cities and creatives

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This thesis began by questioning the prevailing idea that “every human being is creative” (Florida, 2002, p. 4) when reviewing the interactions between creative people and the city. After setting out the parameters of those being studied in this thesis, this section demonstrates the importance of examining differences and similarities among carefully defined groups and national cultures.

This chapter begins by discussing the observed segregation of creatives and their activities within New York, drawing on the author's earlier work as well as published research. It then looks at the case of fashion creatives. Here we see how their activities interact with the city and the people that live in it. One purpose of the section is to make the reader aware of why empirical findings of the thesis cannot cover all creatives equally, despite the importance of acknowledging the differences in activities.

The remaining sections turn our attention to cultural policy, finding that there are strong generic features in the 'cultural policies' pursued by many cities and that it is rare for them to exhibit or accommodate the diversity of practices being examined here.

### **Creatives' stratification in New York**

The largest western capitals (sometimes referred to as 'primate cities', see Sassen, 2005) are the commonest research foci when it comes to understanding how creative people interact with the city. The focus of interest is often the 'creative milieu' (Törnqvist, 1983) or displacement issues akin to gentrification (Champion, 2010). The assumption is that there is no spatial differentiation between the different creatives' activities; their daily life (live), working practices (work), and pleasure seeking (play). Mele (2000) and Peck (2005) suggest that the reason for this phenomenon is the inflated housing market and cost of living in many of these cities, forcing most creatives to combine, live and work activities in the same space. In an attempt to see how the varying creative practices of our distinct groups of 'creatives' (defined above) affect their use of space, this research concentrates on work activities. This is where the differences among groups would be most likely to arise.

Before looking at Manchester (the UK) and Brno (the Czech Republic) as second order cities (Sassen, 2005) in chapter five, we look at how studying work activities within a primate city, such as New York (USA), can change our perspective on how creatives interact with the city. By studying this intense environment, we can make clear observations on the 'tribalism' that exists among creatives.

The classic example used in the study between the relationship of creatives and the city environment is New York. One of the first notable studies was that of Jane Jacobs' (1961) observation of 1950s New York inner-city neighbourhoods. In this she showed that the precise demand of the ad-hoc nature as well as diverse nature of the population and urban fabric provided the vibrancy to generate economic and social activity, resulting in civic revitalisation. There is also the notable study by Sharon Zukin (1982); she examined how cultural production and consumption contributed towards the gentrification of deindustrialised buildings in New York.

My 2004 study of New York's Lower East Side found that creatives are spatially segregated within the tenement building structure, as well as across New York in general. Figure 3 is a summary of the different needs of the different creative subgroups that I identified at that time.

As we discuss below, these different needs have spatial and geographical impacts:

The fine art subgroup is typically made up of painters and designers. The universal demand of this subgroup is the need for storage space. Painters tend to have more spatial demands than their peers do and as they work with natural light and solvents, large windows that can be opened are important. To receive the most sunlight the room should have a skylight and windows positioned on the South-facing walls. However, for the best diffuse lighting, North-facing windows are best, as they do not cast shadows. This subgroup is flexible in location; nonetheless, the top floor is the preferred option.

The plastic art subgroup share similar storage needs as their fine art counterparts. The most important difference is that their medium and equipment is often bulkier and heavier, meaning they have to be as close to the ground floor as possible and ideally have direct access to transport from their studio.

It has also been noticed in the master's degree fieldwork that the fashion subgroups usually combined the production and selling activities in the same space and were commonly located in shopping areas. This was thought to be because the activity of selling creative goods is more space-specific and place-specific. Like any commercial shops, they need large windows and on-street/passageway frontage where there are large concentrations of people. We will see if this is also the case in Manchester and Brno.

The performance subgroup can range from musicians to thespians. They are grouped together here because of their shared spatial requirements for performing, rehearsing, and recording spaces. The common issues for this subgroup are freed to make noise and the movement of equipment. The latter issue is similar to the plastic art subgroup.

			Creatives' subgroup				
			Fine art	Plastic art	Fashion	Performance	Literature
Essential needs	Workplace interior	Electricity	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Yes	Depends on mode of production	Not essential
		Floor level	Not essential	Depends on size of work (normally at ground level)	Ground floor frontage	Flexible	Not essential
		High ceiling	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Not essential	Not essential	Not essential
		Large windows	Depends on mode of production. Essential for painters	Not essential	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Not essential
		Storage security	Depends on mode of production	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not essential
		Size of room(s)	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Flexible	Not essential
		Sound proofing	Not essential	Not essential	Not essential	Yes - especially during recording	Not essential
		Water	Depends on mode of production	Depends on mode of production	Not essential	Not essential	Not essential
	Surroundings	Amenities	Not essential	Not essential	Not essential	Flexible	Relaxing
		Atmosphere	Flexible	Flexible	Centre of commerce (high footfall)	Area tolerant of noise	Relaxing
		Infrastructure	Flexible	Close to good public transport or car park	At a transport hub	Close to good public transport or car park	Not essential

Figure 3: Subgroups generated by the divergence of particular needs, and their main land-use competitors, in New York City. The matrix produced by Aaron Mo from analysis of a series of interviews with New York City creatives in 2004 (Mo, 2005a).

Noise is the most contested issue for areas containing performance subgroup activities. Thus, it is important that units must be well insulated or located away



from people who require a quiet environment, i.e., residents in the evenings and when people are working. The noisy mixed-use location of Lower East Side means that the management of clashes with neighbours or other genres of creative activity are less of an issue because the area is generally accepted as noisy. This is especially so where the majority of spaces for the performance subgroup are found at ground or basement level.

The literature subgroup, like poets and writers, are the most spatially detached/undemanding of all subgroups. I have attended literary events in public places during my fieldwork in Lower East Side; these places were in pubs and cafés. These meeting and performing requirements are distinct from requirements for actual writing. A common response from informants in New York, when asked about the most important aspect of the space and place for writing, was the 'correct environment'. This ranged from being in a place good for 'people-watching'; or listening to good music; to complete isolation.

An important finding of my 2005 study was that creatives could be split into different sets of five general practices. It also suggested that the subgroups could be split again because of their working medium (see figure 4 for the further splits between painters and photographers, within the fine art subgroup). However, it can be seen that these subgroups have common preferred spatial consumption patterns at building-level. There needs to be more research on the micro-level aspect on creatives' urban spatial practices.

			Fine Art subgroup	
			Painters	Photographers
Essential needs	Workplace interior	Electricity	Not essential	Yes (for dark room)
		Floor level	Positioned with good natural lighting	Not essential
		High ceiling	Not essential	Not essential
		Large windows	Essential	Ideally no windows
		Storage security	Yes	Yes
		Size of room(s)	Not essential	Two rooms needed
		Sound proofing	Not essential	Not essential
		Water	Yes	Yes
	Surroundings	Amenities	Not essential	Not essential
		Atmosphere	Flexible	Flexible
		Infrastructure	Car parking	Flexible

Figure 4: Creative subgroups diverged by mode of production. The matrix produced by Aaron Mo from analysis of a series of interviews with New York City creatives in 2004 (Mo, 2005a).

This observation is different to the idea of absolute physical clustering of all activities by those shown in figure 1, which came from Richard Florida's 2002 Creative Class concept. Instead, I observed in the New York fieldwork glimpses of various creatives with distinct activities (for example, sewing, painting and computing) that require different spaces and places. Thus, to provide one generic workplace for all creatives is not possible.

The concepts of class used in social science, based on individuals' economic position, standing in society and consciousness of shared identity (Massey, 1984; Giddens, 1979; Urry, 1985) do not apply to the diverse creative producers considered here. An important part of the present research is to explore the spatial practices of creatives and to do so at various geographical scales: from building to international level.

Painters universally need natural lighting, storage, and paints. Thus, I do not expect to find any differences in spatial needs and demands between creatives in Manchester and Brno working in similar fields. Yet, the spatial movement between life, work, and play activities is perhaps more likely to vary between cities and countries. For example, I observed in personal visits that in Istanbul most clubs are found on the top level of buildings, not on ground or basement levels as in New York. These relationships between creative practices and the use of buildings and urban space have hardly ever been researched. However, one must be wary about aiming to develop a complete understanding of this phenomenon, as modernisation of techniques and changes in land-uses by all creatives, means that they have constantly changing needs. This research should be more pragmatic when understanding the type of physical space required during all activities undertaken by creatives throughout their creative development.

A common theme of research on creatives in the Lower East Side has been what drives the tendency for creatives to be displaced as gentrification progresses. Due to the specific spatial demands of painters, compared with other creatives' modes of production, they tend to be the first to be displaced (Mo, 2005a).

The performance subgroup workplaces (especially rehearsal rooms) have more anchorage in a gentrifying area because they are mainly found below ground level. There is little market demand for residential space below ground level, and building codes are stricter about turning the space into bars and clubs. In addition, the basement space is less desired for bar use because the capacity is lower than a ground floor bar. In 2006, even well-known and popular music

venues, such as CBGB,<sup>52</sup> began to close as a result of gentrification (Marcuse, 1986; Smith 1986; Kokenes, 2006).

Displacement does not mean that creatives' urban spatial practices have disappeared from gentrified areas. Parts of New York's Lower East Side may have been 'yuppified' and 'studentified' (Atkinson & Easthope, 2009; Mo, 2009a), however, it is still associated with a fashion legacy, and is now branded the 'garment district' (Currid, 2007; Rantisi, 2004).

This labelling of gentrified creative areas like the 'garment district' is often part of the 'cultural and creative industries' and 'regeneration' policy-making (discussed later in this section): such areas are expected to generate multiplier effects through attracting tourists and other visitors to spend money in the area in addition to the creatives' local spending.

Of course, this legacy is not all down to the fashion subgroup. There is also their associates such as photographers, promoters, musicians, models, and so on, all of whom contribute to creating 'buzz', promoting and selling fashion products (Currid, 2007). Not all are located in New York but this district is a focus of their common activity. The importance of 'buzz' is explored further in chapter four.

Not all of these creatives share the same aesthetic tastes nor do they have the same associate categories. These varying patterns of interests sometimes conflict. Some groups find themselves repelled by other groups and are thus spatially separated. For example, a neighbourhood of heavy-metal music and its associated clothing (with leather and studs) is likely to be most unappealing to people in other musical and dress genres, like folk musicians. Thus, subgroups may be geographically segregated within a city.

It seems that creatives have a wide range of practices, cognition,<sup>53</sup> and scenes<sup>54</sup> across which a socially diverse range of actors consume and produce in greatly different ways. The creatives, in which members share aesthetic preferences, and their milieu, are often referred to as 'scenes'. The scenes may originate from one place, yet ideas and aesthetics are transferable, thus are often spread across the world. The 'zone of influence' (Boschma, 2005) of a scene is dependent on cultural facilitators, such as; fashion schools, clubs, 'buzz creation', 'gatekeepers', 'tastemakers', and 'cultural producers' from other

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<sup>52</sup> CBGB is a club, on 315 Bowery at Bleecker Street, for hosting gigs by bands from the punk and New Wave genres.

<sup>53</sup> 'Cognition' denotes the intellectual process of creation of the artwork. The process is driven by many subjective factors, which may include taste, preferred mode of production, and aesthetic approach to working.

<sup>54</sup> The subgroups, in which members share aesthetic preferences, and their milieu, are often referred to as 'scenes'. The Punk scene is an example used in this thesis.

subgroups. See Rantisi (2004) and Currid (2007) for detailed explanations of each term.

Looking again at the Lower East Side (NY), many people with an appreciation of the punk culture are still attracted to visit the area, because of its established punk scene while, others could find it distasteful and are attracted to other areas. For example, those interested in electroclash would likely be found in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, where the electroclash scene is more established (Mo, 2005a). These scenes also have different transnational geographic patterns. For example, punk is also connected with Camden, while electroclash is associated with Hackney, both places in different parts of London.

This relationship among work activities, the use of physical space, and the role and level of involvement of cultural facilitators in specific creative practices is under-researched. This is significant as research could identify important elements to consider when creating cultural policies.

#### **The rise of cultural policy**

Stern and Seifert (1998 & 2007) have theorised that ‘natural’ cultural districts evolve organically because of individual decisions and activities from creators and participants. Policies using creativity as a tool for urban development are not new, but have only recently become widespread at all tiers of government (Shields, 1999; Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002; Kunzmann, 2004; Manning Thomas & Darton, 2006, etc.).

According to Moss (2002), Markusen & Gadwa (2010) and Peck (2011), the government’s use of cultural policies for urban growth was a niche tactic in Britain during the 1980s. At that time, culture-led planning was popular with left-leaning local governments such as Sheffield (Moss, 2002) and the ‘socialist Labour’ controlled Greater London Council (GLC) (Peck, 2011). Markusen & Gadwa (2010) claimed that the GLC “turned to cultural planning and programming as a broad strategy for economic and community development, including neighbourhood, community, and downtown revitalization” (p. 379).

Jamie Peck (2011) spoke of the new wave of cultural planning in the 1990s as also having the broad goal of “leveraging ‘culture’ in the service of urban development” (p. 62) but with a new formula that was designed around consumption: “culturally inflected economic development, rebadged promotional strategies, and new age gentrification” (p. 42). Peck argued that focusing mostly on the market and the cultural and creative industries had become the new pillar of creative-led development.

Regarding the support of cultural and creative industries at national level, the government of Australia’s “Creative Nation” was published in 1994 and appears

to have been a landmark event as it was the first case of a national policy (Thurley, 2009). During the mid to late 1990s some countries also followed suit such as Tanzania (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1997), however, the establishment of such policies was rarely achieved (British Council, 2009). Ultimately, it was not Australia's pioneering policy that became the template for cultural policy, but UK's Creative Industries: Mapping Document (DCMS, 1998).

Angela McRobbie distinguished two important points in the development of the British/UK cultural and creative industries.<sup>55</sup> First, the New Labour government attempted to redefine culture and the arts away from their more traditional image as recipients of funding, towards a more aggressively promotional and entrepreneurial ethos in 1998. This was in order to 'become more British' for the international market (McRobbie, 1999). The second significant point came in 2007 where there was intense commercial interest in culture and arts by small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (McRobbie, 2010). Cultural planning has become a useful tool for any city aiming to become an entrepreneurial city (Harvey, 1989). See chapter five for more details.

The basic form of cultural planning was to use public art, architecture and landscaping to beautify an area (O'Connor J, 1998). While, Markusen & Gadwa (2010) suggested that there are two widely employed and more sophisticated strategic choices: (1) designated cultural districts anchored by large performing and visual arts spaces versus dispersed "natural" cultural districts with smaller scale non-profit, commercial, and community cultural venues, and (2), tourist-targeted versus local-serving cultural investments (pp. 379-380).

These days, there is an understanding that creative products could be used for economic renewal (Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002; Arnoldus, 2004; Currid, 2007), as well as creating a local distinction and collective status in the 'new cultural economy' (Scott, 2006). This belief is strengthened by the post-Fordist society and the modern-day need for a neighbourhood, city or region to have a 'competitive edge' (Zukin, 1982).

### **Culture and land use**

In his analysis of Amsterdam as a 'creative cultural knowledge city' Musterd (2004) emphasised the importance of land ownership, as the high percentage of publicly owned buildings (54%) means creatives will be under less pressure to move and cannot be displaced. Miles (2002) emphasised the importance of ownership of art studios when commenting that the Artspace Project helped the rise of the grass-roots-produced Toronto arts scene. The benefit of ownership was also noted in London (Fisher, 2002; Mayor of London, 2007) and Italy's

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<sup>55</sup> Many people often cite the British cultural and creative industry as a definitive case to study.

'Centri Sociali' (Membretti, 2007). One of the places of interest in this present research, Islington Mill, is owned by a former fashion designer from Central Saint Martins. It would be interesting to see the impact of building owners who empathise with creatives and how they manage important collective workplaces. This impact will be observed in the ethnography and synthesised in the conclusion.

Physically clustering different sets of activities, such as living and working, as well as workplaces is normal during creative-led planning. The aim of clustering is to invite animation and vibrancy in the public realm, thus the areas becoming inviting to too-many people. Shorthose (2004) agrees that clustering of entertainment venues is important in creating an 'urban playscape' (Chatterton & Hollands, 2002 & 2003), which is essential to creative-led development.<sup>56</sup> He noted that a café-bar close to Nottingham's Broadway independent cinema and arts centre became the natural meeting place for local cultural producers and subsequently for general members of the public.

Implementing life/work units is also common practice. Foord (2010) believes that mixed use and tenure approaches could be effective today because of the development of the new urban economy (Hutton, 2008; Scott, 2000) and the emergence of an 'urban idyll' inhabited by consumption-oriented sub-cultures (Allen, 2007; Featherstone, 2007; Hoskins & Tallon, 2004).

Yet, these developing 'urban idylls' (clusters of creatives) are unstable. Figure 5 shows an alternative film rental shop (and meeting place for local creatives) that was found in Broadway Market, Hackney, in 2004. It had moved from Old Street, but, was again in the process of moving out even further due to a dramatic increase in rent. Since few creatives are freehold property owners, looking for places with cheap rent means that their locations are unstable, because they have to be flexible and extremely mobile.

There are some British and American cities intensifying areas with different and animated land uses, ultimately with the aim to provide an environment similar to 'European cities', i.e., "a strangely mythical, amorphous notion involving café bars, cappuccinos and late licences" (Brown, O'Connor & Cohen, 2000, p. 439). It is widely believed that café culture fosters creativity and can be identified in the history of many European cities, such as Prague, which peaked between the years 1900 and 1930 (Winner, 2009). Prague coffee houses played a special and vital role in the local creative scenes; many groups had their own table, where intense discussions took place and writers, artists, and critics met. Café culture as a cultural activity has become one of the central pivots of the soft urban assets in the concept of the 24 hour city (sometimes overlapping with

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<sup>56</sup> Regulation of the night-time economy is an element of Chatterton & Hollands' concept of the 'urban playscapes' concept; however this thesis's use of the term relates more to its other element: the 'urban playscape' as a city space for such consumption.

what is referred to as the night-time economy) as an approach for civic revitalisation (Comedia, 1991; Montgomery, 2003; Mayor of London, 2007; Lee C. B., 2009).



Figure 5: The Film Shop at Broadway Market, East London, 2004. This embroidered tea towel was made and put on the window of this independent film shops as a protest against gentrification at Broadway Market. The Film Shop had closed down shortly after this picture was taken. Photograph by Aaron Mo, 2004.

The majority of the authors mentioned in this chapter are from the UK. The British planner's romantic desire to extend pub culture to a 'Continental European' lifestyle of pavement cafés is ironically taken up in many European cities (for example, Baert & Paris, 2011). In fact, alcohol consumption is most Europeans' principal social activity, which need not be limited to the evenings. If we look at the Czech Republic, the café culture of the intelligentsia era (1900-1930s) has moved to the hospoda (pub). T. Hall's (2003) ethnographic study of beer culture in the Czech Republic suggests that all manner of socialisation is based on a large consumption of alcohol [I have witnessed pubs on the peak of mountains], as Czechs have one of the highest rates of general alcohol consumption over the last century in Europe. Alcohol consumption in the public sphere is largely in kavárna (café), hospoda and herna bars (casino).

The interplay of the cultural quarters policy and the 24-hour-city policy, often involves managing different land use activities in the same place at different times (Shaw 2010). By catering for different activities at different times, a space can accommodate different groups. For example, the modification of use from typically café restaurants and café bars to nightclubs by adding a DJ and dance floor. The cultural facilitators who manage such activities are an often overlooked aspect of creative-led developments and cultural policy.

However, some studies have found that this sort of creative and flexible management is threatened when large corporate leisure and entertainment firms act as key players in the night-time economy; they will relegate culture to a passive cultural consumerism, which removes “the advantages of informal cultural activity [that provides] continual redefinition of cultural production based upon new forms of interaction and collaboration” (Shorthose, 2004, p.172). Essentially, the market-driven process (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003; Roberts, 2009) ignored the creatives’ pragmatism and eradicated the spontaneous characteristics of the original idea of the 24 hour city, which the night-time economy relied on.

Most criticisms of the 24 hour city are concerned with the disorderly and often violent atmosphere associated with night-time entertainment. Such disorderly behaviour is often linked with the use of substances, particularly alcohol.

Ultimately, poor public space management amplifies the above problems with clustering and congestion of drunken people on the streets (Brabazon & Mallinder, 2007; Hadfield, 2006; Roberts, 2009).

Some of these problems of disruptive behaviour can in fact be minimised and managed through the way space is designed, sound levels regulated and DJs influence the mood of the crowd. Hadfield (2006) suggests zooming in to examine these details and understanding the venues’ impact in terms of; architectural designs, spatial arrangements, lighting, sound level, and DJ skills. Shaw (2010) observed the very high-volume music played by DJs in clubs dominating other sounds and encouraging people in the club to undertake some activities over others; for example, dancing rather than making conversation. A person takes in one type of information, and subsequently influences the person’s emotions (Institute of Health Equity, 2009). Shaw (2010) described the loud music from the club DJ as influential to the collective behaviour of those in the room. The role of the DJs and sound level is an interesting ingredient; they are identified as having a key role in the management of the club, in that they capture and direct the mood of the audience and can minimise conflict with neighbours (Hadfield, 2006). This paragraph may seem out-of-place at the moment; the understanding of sound dominating other sounds will become clearer as the thesis’ narrative progresses.



### **Contextual insensitivity in cultural policy**

The well-received arguments on the importance of cultural workers for economic and urban growth, presented by Richard Florida (2002) and the UK government's Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS, 1998), raised the profile of cultural quarters as an urban policy instrument worldwide. All around the world most creative-led policymakers are in line with the western-based definitions and 'best practice'.

Creative-led urban developments have ostensibly evolved and established into a form where there is a dualism of culture and economy, which comes together through the lived experience of place (Shields, 1999) and is able to appropriate itself to an entrepreneurial city agenda. Many 'best practice' policies were being translocated to different parts of the world, often materialising without analysis of associated resource use or consequences (Markusen & Gadwa, 2010).

Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi (2010) added that copying best practices could be insensitive to physical context but also to technological advancement, as they may "fail to appreciate the complexities of urban living in a networked age" (p. 5). This further suggests that the creative clusters may do more harm than good, i.e., loss of identity, gentrification, diverting resources into other areas or exclusive enclaves (Biddulph, 2011).

Landry (2000), Evans (2009), Luckman, Gibson & Lea (2009), and Biddulph (2011) warned that copying proven cultural policies and infrastructure without considering the local 'creative' sensitivity meant that many cities are left with a lack of distinctiveness. With this in mind, this thesis is framed so that it reveals at least some of the specific variations in cultural practices that ought to be borne in mind when making policy in and for specific places. In doing so, it will help to suggest ways of bringing back local distinctiveness to a global phenomenon.

A common response of cities to globalisation is to neutralise their past, through discarding some of their historic identity (Chatterton & Hollands, 2003). This is achieved by altering meaning and physical perception to promote tourism scene creation, or neutralise negative connotations (Mo, 2005a). In other words, cities tend to sacrifice their distinctive local histories and aesthetics in the quest for some relatively generic or standardised cultural appeal.

In contrast, it is argued by some writers that cities have much to gain by building their strategies around existing local specialisations. Jayne (2004) studied Stoke and its ceramic significance, and advocated that it should retain and develop a cultural and creative industry based on ceramicists' skills and mode of production.

The above discussion is not intended to prevent the transfer of policies from one city or country to another, only to argue that there is a need for context-

dependent and context-sensitive cultural intervention, which can be studied through ethnography. For example, Ho (2009) and Luckman, Gibson & Lea (2009) argued that the European idea of 'live/work' premises could validly be applied, with a good chance of success in Singapore because of the country's tradition of 'shop-house' as a standard urban building type.

Finally, it should be stressed that the present research is not confined to economic aspects of creatives' practices, i.e., the creative market (Landry & Wood, 2007). In that context, the idea of creativity, through culture, is nothing but bait attracting more funds for development. The aim here is to be more inclusive and comprehensive.

### Chapter 3: Localising the globalised cultural and creative industries and cognitive knowledge

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In the previous chapters it was argued, drawing on literature and the author's earlier work, that creatives working in various fields follow distinct spatial practices. The discussion of the punk and electroclash scenes (in the '*Creatives' stratification in New York*' section) indicated some of the translocal<sup>57</sup> movements of people and ideas. To throw more light on this argument, it is now necessary to analyse the way in which creatives interact with space and place. This chapter contextualises these micro-level interactions in wider spatial scales up to the global level. Part of the analysis concerns the core-periphery relationships within cities and within nations.

It is understandable that creatives tend to migrate towards the world's leading concentrations of creative markets, e.g., London and New York. Such cities are sometimes called 'primate cities'. Therefore, there have been many studies carried out in these cities and other national capitals. This is only part of the story, however, and this study aims to explore the role of smaller, more peripheral, cities and the core/non-core relationships involved. Some creatives stay in their towns of origin or migrate only as far up the city-size hierarchy as second order cities. This chapter suggests how creatives in such cities as Manchester and Brno conduct their work routine and choose the location of each activity to cope with their relative peripherality.

#### Creative production

This thesis focuses mainly on the work and other related activities undertaken by creatives living in second order cities, as observed during my fieldwork. I observed a wide variety of activities during the fieldwork. Not all creatives' activities contain identical steps but there are commonalities, such as conceiving, preparing, researching, publicising and selling work (Becker, 1982; Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor & Raffo, 2000). Becker (1982) added that there are important technical activities like priming a canvass and everyday activities, like drinking coffee and sweeping, that make an environment easier to work in. He calls them 'support activities'. These activities are often an asset in a routine and are undertaken at different stages in time, space and places (Hall P., 1998; Burke, 2000).

There are two distinct ways that the various activities and environments can be broadly grouped together: creative production and the creative market (Mo, 2009a). Creative production is designed around sharing and accumulating

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<sup>57</sup> Translocation and translocal are terms used in this thesis as ideas being shared beyond geographical boundaries, yet, at the same time may be localised and manifest at specific points.

knowledge between complex networks of independent sets of people (Hall P., 1998), for example, from accumulating knowledge to implementing an idea. Creatives are exposed to and communicate with a variety of people with different ideas, information, and skills. Implementation also requires access to tools and materials.

The knowledge process relies heavily on gaining information from many types of people. These people need not be in one place, space or locality:

*The [knowledge] process might be described in terms of an assembly-line. As items of information moved along the route from the field to the city, many different individuals added their contribution. By this means knowledge was 'produced' [...] processing knowledge in these ways was a collective activity in which scholars participate alongside bureaucrats, artists and painters. This kind of collaboration was only possible in cities large enough to support a wide variety of specialist occupations. Different cities made distinctive contributions in an international division of labour. (Burke, 2000, pp. 75-76)*

Marshall (1890) noted that there are places with large pools of specific resources, such as books, large cutting machines or groups of experts, that makes them specialised for certain activities. This is in addition to Becker's (1982) emphasis on the environment: one important example is the busy British pub. Wittel (2001) suggests people's willingness to talk and the 'playful attitude' in pubs leads to an intensification of certain types of work like networking (see chapter four). Other places observed are educational places for teaching (Hall P., 1998; Florida, 2005) and 'vernacular spaces' largely for everyday non-elite creative activities (Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi, 2010; Rantisi & Leslie, 2010). Hojman & Szeidl (2008) believe the pooling of resources increases the individuals' access to a deep and wide range of people, material and knowledge pools.

Becker (1982) emphasised that these specialised nodes for pooling resources are spread out. Nevertheless, they need to be accessed by all kinds of creatives. In theory, it is possible to connect these pools of resources by shared profession or aesthetic cognition (Hauge & Hracs, 2010), making a large pool of people, materials and knowledge. The obstacle is in knowing that these resources exist, then accessing them. Separate groups and/or localities must be networked and acquainted with each other.

There are two notable categories of people who are especially useful in disseminating information. I call them cultural gatekeepers and socialites. They are not necessarily creatives themselves. Becker (1982) claimed that the cultural gatekeepers<sup>58</sup> provide the distinct and rationalised artworks (e.g., a music group defined as an 'indie band' because the NME<sup>59</sup> put them on the

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<sup>58</sup> Becker called the cultural gatekeepers "aestheticians (or whoever does the job)" (Becker, 1982, p. 164).

<sup>59</sup> The NME is a weekly music newspaper that is widely read by people who consume indie music.

front cover as such), which make the work easier to sell in the marketplace. However, he did acknowledge some creatives and their work might survive in the cultural and creative industries without the aid of cultural gatekeepers.

There is no official job title in cultural and creative industries for those I name socialites<sup>60</sup>. Yet, there are some studies highlighting the importance of people connecting informants and sharing information. Putnam (2000) suggested that people who have conversation and networking skills are important members of society in building a community. Van Heur (2010a&b) and Gu (2010) noted that not everyone is good at these activities and that they need someone to represent them to those with the required pool of resources. There is more evidence of this division of labour in the cultural and creative industries and that those gifted in socialising and connecting strangers are key members of any creative community. They allow the “cross-fertilization between sectorally-specialized networks” (Storper & Venables, 2004, p. 365) during creative production and subsequently the development of a creative sector. In fact, some people have been employed as ‘ice-breakers’ during events (McRobbie, 2011).

#### **The creative market and other forms of sustaining creatives**

There are three main principles in the circulation of material goods: “reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange” (Eriksen, 2001, p. 184). These are the normal ways people sustain their livelihoods. Hauge & Hracs' (2010) study of indie musicians and fashion designers shows that a combination of reciprocity and bartering is used by the cultural and creative industry between peers. Nevertheless, market exchange is the most common method of exchanging their goods.

The goods sold need not only be the direct product like a gig or a painting; goods associated with the product, such as a tour T-shirt or recorded music from the gig, are also sold (Hauge & Hracs, 2010). Sometimes, creatives sell their skill and services via a commissioned project. McRobbie (2010) claims that: many must hold down multiple short-term projects at once just to survive. Each product and service has potentially multiple channels within a global distribution system, often through specialised intermediaries, not the creatives themselves (Becker, 1982). Askegaard & Kjeldgaard (2006) believe that the global nature of any cultural and creative industry means that competitive advantage for any creative is achieved by focusing on the international market to reach out to more potential consumers, favourable to his or her product. However, reaching out and forming new links to new international marketplaces

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<sup>60</sup> Although some people are highlighted as ‘networkers’ or ‘ice-breakers’, I prefer to use socialites because the name feels less cold and clinical.

consumes time, which could be spent to develop new products and services (Chen & Tan, 2008; Hong & Song, 2010). Specialised intermediaries could be used. Again, this requires a division of labour.

The multiple channels for consumption within the creative market can be found in many virtual and physical platforms – like websites and shops. The creative market is where many creatives try to make a living from trading their products or services. However, many are not able, or not willing (Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi, 2010), to survive from selling their creativity. They are, therefore, relying on a second income.

According to Gu (2010), few creatives are in full-time employment for their second income; many are part-time workers or in freelance work. Some of the work could be related to the cultural and creative industry, such as, an 'ice-breaker' for an events company or arts-related social worker (McRobbie, 2011). McRobbie (1999) also noted that dole money, also known as unemployment benefits, could be beneficial to some creatives as it gives them time to go around specialised 'creative nodes' and seek extra resources. She highlighted Alan McGee, from the UK government's Creative Industries Task Force and founder of Creation Records, who praised the role of dole money in the cultural and creative industries: "without the dole [money] young musicians would not be able to write songs, rehearse, and hang about in the pub waiting for inspiration" (McRobbie, 1999, p. 5).

The creative market is the half of the creative ecosystem that is based on the circulation of goods through certain nodes and channels. Creative production is the other half of the creative ecosystem and is based on the circulation of knowledge among resource holders. This circulation is seemingly more active in places where there are pools of specialised resources. A second income is essentially used as a means to make a living and allow time for creative production. The following section will look at how nodes for creative production and the creative market relate to each other.

#### **Geographical proximity: relationship between cities**

The previous chapter suggested that cultural and creative industries have a tendency to agglomerate, where the circulation of knowledge between resource holders is most active. According to Peter Hall (1998), the functions of these so-called creative milieus are: to distribute information among people, become a storage place for information and memories, be a place for certain activities, and meet or synergise with other creatives.

Landry (2000) and Florida (2002) are two notable promoters of the creative milieu; many of those implementing their notions have assumed the milieu should be one big agglomeration occupying one part of a city.

However, Peter Hall's (1998) study of Manchester's relationship with innovation and creativity of new machineries during the industrial revolution showed that these creative milieus are in fact geographically spread out in patches in and around the city. The innovators and workers moved between these milieus.

Drake's 2003 study of craft metalwork and digital designers in London, Sheffield, and Birmingham validated Hall's (1998) historical study and applied it to the modern day cultural and creative industries. He found similar location patterns of specialised production and categorised four typologies of clusters: locality as a resource of visual raw materials and stimuli, locality-based intensive social and cultural networks, locality as a brand based on reputation and tradition and locality-specific communities of creative workers.

As with Manchester during the industrial revolution, each typology of locality from Drake's (2003) study had its own specialised role, which contributed to the advancement of the industry sector. However, these localities need not be in the same city. Sometimes a city can be the dominant focal point of the region, such as Manchester during the Industrial Revolution. Other times there is no dominant centre and functions are shared amongst the region,<sup>61</sup> like the Rhine-Main region (Hall & Pain, 2006).

If we put together Homi Bhabha's and Jennifer Robinson's observations that "culture has many locations" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 23) and "cities exist in a world of other cities" (Robinson, 2011a, p. 1), it would be obvious to conclude that any localised cultural and creative industries are not isolated and are subjected to external influences. Burke (2000) observed that global links between city nodes are not a recent phenomenon and cities have always been "staging-posts in the 'long-distance networks'" and a "memorial for universal learning" (p. 56). He gave the example of English intelligencers being sent to and residing in foreign places. Their role was to be cultural gatekeepers between England and their host nation. A modern day example would be the British Council (see chapter four).

Scott, Agnew, Soja & Storper (2001), Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi (2010) and Lüthi, Thierstein & Goebel (2010) added that clustered nodes secure increased efficiency of the global economic system by intensifying creativity, learning, and innovation, through horizontal (technology, information, or other resource-sharing) flows of ideas and technological and knowledge spillovers.<sup>62</sup>

A network of nodes is required for creative production and the creative economy. Communication between networks is important in the creative

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<sup>61</sup> See Oberti, 2000; Scott, Agnew, Soja & Storper, 2001; Hall P., 2003; Evans, 2004; Robinson, 2009, etc.

<sup>62</sup> Technological and knowledge spillovers are information, skills and other forms of knowledge that are passed to people and places at the periphery of a cluster (Hall P., 1998).

economy and cities have always been centres of networking and communication within any global economy (O'Connor J, 1998; Landry, 2000). Some authors<sup>63</sup> noted that the densest centres for forming networks<sup>64</sup> are found in large cities; normally in capital cities where they were historical trading centres, dense transport nodes, and where a variety of expertise and information converge. The established roles lead to the development of what Hutton (1997) calls specialised services.<sup>65</sup> These roles in turn intensify knowledge and learning concentrations by becoming the seat of social interaction (Bagnasco & Le Galès, 2000; van Heur, 2009) and allow: flexibility, development of networks and offset risk when entering the market (Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor & Raffo, 2000; Scott, 2001).

Like any modern industry, production operations are just as effective if geographically spread and located outside large (core) cities in an effort to reduce overheads. Yet, those living in second order cities or lower-level (peripheral) cities still rely on core cities for specialised services, connection to large concentrations of cultural gatekeepers and socialites, and according to Robinson (2009) easier access to other core cities.

The emergence of the core-periphery relationships of creatives with the creative markets and specialised services means it is important to identify some of the closest, and probably the most influential core cities to the case studies of this thesis. It seems probable that Manchester is most likely to be influenced by relatively nearby larger cities, like London and Glasgow. Brno is surrounded by larger core cities at a closer proximity than Manchester to Glasgow or London, notably Prague, Vienna and Bratislava. However, Brno's adjacent core cities (with the exception of Vienna) have arguably, less established creative markets.

### **Cognitive proximity: the zone of influence**

According to Boschma (2005), geographical proximity is not the only key issue of *location theory*<sup>66</sup> that have influence on knowledge accumulation, creativity and innovation; other factors listed below also play their roles. His 2005 paper also cited the importance of: cognitive,<sup>67</sup> organisational,<sup>68</sup> social<sup>69</sup> and institutional<sup>70</sup> proximities. His theory informed us on why there is occasionally

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<sup>63</sup> Such as Sassen (1991), O'Brien, 1992, P Hall (1998), Burke (2000) and Edensor, Leslie, Millington, & Rantisi (2010).

<sup>64</sup> Consequently, attracting cultural gatekeepers and socialites into the city (Becker, 1982).

<sup>65</sup> Such as head office and senior management, finance, and business or "producer" service.

<sup>66</sup> The concern of geographic location and economic activity.

<sup>67</sup> Cognitive proximity is the person or firm's proximity to their existing knowledge base.

<sup>68</sup> Organisational proximity is associated with the closeness of actors in organisational terms.

<sup>69</sup> Social proximity is the embedded, trust-based interaction between actors.

<sup>70</sup> Institutional proximity account for the interactions between players are influenced, shaped and constrained by the institutional environment.



more economic activity in some creative milieus between the core and peripheral cities, than that in the other milieus within the same city.

There will be more discussion on social proximity in the following chapter but, like Boschma (2005), this section will pay more attention to cognitive proximity. Especially, as it highlights the sets of ideas and ways of doing things that dominate a person's decision-making, which I call 'cognitive direction', and is thought to be an important barrier to the access and exchange of knowledge and information.

Burke (2000) indicated that access to knowledge is path-dependent and is provided by "systems of production, coercion and cognition" (p. 7). These systems influence those who share the same cognition and exclude others with: different thought processes, ways of working, taste, aesthetic appreciation and understanding of certain codes and jargon (Simonton, 2003). It is common sense to presume that a person's set of cognition is unique, forming individual 'zones of influence'. Individual creatives may choose their own 'zones of influence'. They have the freedom to choose their own preferred mode of production, favour certain aesthetics, and be attracted to certain ideas and interests. Also, these choices may direct them towards specific organisations, institutes, other cultural gatekeepers, or peers for guidance.

Yet, an individual's personal trait, rather than choice, may also shape their 'zones of influence' (Quemin, 2006). For example, a Spanish creative person without the knowledge of the English language would be more Iberian centred and is more likely to be influenced by cultural gatekeepers in Barcelona and Madrid than those from London and New York. This may be because of: the differences in language; various countries with different 'category systems'<sup>71</sup>, religions and political censorship; and, different cultural references (Bagnasco & Le Galès, 2000; Burke, 2000). However, these cultural barriers could be overcome. It is acknowledged that the influences from the Anglophone world could affect this hypothetical Spanish person, but the information may filter to the person slower and recoded (like translated) possibly via Spanish-speaking cultural gatekeepers or by the person learning English.

Collective sets of cognitions that are shared amongst groups of people may develop generally understood 'zones of influences'. There is a possibility that this facilitates knowledge exchange because information does not need decoding; enforcing a 'tribal society' [sic] (McIntyre 2008; Burke, 2009). They are commonly known as scenes (Currid, 2007). Becker (1982) added that sharing similar cognitive direction<sup>72</sup> and accessing knowledge may lead to trust,

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<sup>71</sup> Take the example of a CD of Balkan Music at a music store, it is found at the 'Српска музика' ('Serbian music') section in Belgrade; but in the London's HMV, a British entertainment retail chain, it would be found at the 'world music' section, as it does not have a 'Serbian music' section.

<sup>72</sup> The sets of ideas and ways of doing things that dominate a person's decision-making.

and subsequently may prompt collective activity, such as cooperation and synergy, and, in turn, advancing creative development and innovation.

A scene may be global, but could also have a local distinction. Cohen (2007) used the examples of the Liverpool and Manchester music scenes to illustrate this point. But for such scenes to enter the creative market, the sound (or style of music) must be recognisable by a global audience. In both of Cohen's studied cases, there were strong connections with the well-acknowledged indie music scene.

In the field of geography, scenes are akin to 'diaspora spaces' (Brah, 1996) and urban 'scapes' (Appadurai, 1996). They are nodes that could have a physical manifestation, be geographically spread and are translocally connected by networks. Smart & Smart (2003) and Crang (2011) believe the nodes that we go to, or avoid, are dependent on the environment where we feel comfortable and meaning of a place. In effect, 'zones of influences' may be globally spread, but localised in clusters of space. The creative ecosystem may be globalised; however, different cognitive thinking means that not every creative is influenced by the same idea. Yet, those with similar cognition and preferred urban 'scape' may connect creatives without being at close geographical proximity (Boschma, 2005; Rantisi, 2004). The mechanisms to bring together those with similar cognition and urban 'scape' will be explored in the following chapter.

In this chapter we have explored the general steps of creative production by the majority of creatives. Some steps are not obviously linked to the cultural and creative industry, such as 'support activities' (Becker, 1982) and second jobs. Many of these steps and 'supporting activities' require different work environments that may be diverse. The likelihood of geographic dispersal of people and activities leads to long distance networking. Yet, people can be linked together by non-physical proximity, like cognitive direction.

## Chapter 4: Uniting creatives

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Creatives clearly vary in many ways, notably in the variety of their creative practices and in intellectual and aesthetic approaches (which could be termed 'cognitive proximity'). These variations correspond to diversity in the geography of their local spatial practices and their larger-scale movements and interactions. At the same time creatives share the need for periodic encounters with others with whom they share aesthetic and production approaches and these encounters are part of the process, which leads to the formation of local and global groups. Yet, the social mechanisms behind encouraging social engagement and the exchange of knowledge and goods need to be explored.

At this point, it is beyond any doubt that creatives and other categories of people who are associated with the cultural and creative industries are included in a series of geographical networks. Chen & Tan (2008) recognised that networks, geography, and entrepreneurship are interrelated. The latter is the main form of employment for a majority of creatives (Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi, 2010; McRobbie, 2011). Entrepreneurs rely on the mechanisms of social capital that produce clusters and create channels for the flow of information (Currid, 2007; van Heur, 2009 and 2010 a & b; Gu, 2010, etc.). Any efficient mechanism needs to create social networks that are cohesive and sustainable. How are social networks formed and where are they located? This will be the main interest of this chapter.

### Social capital

This thesis builds on Alfred Marshall's (1890) idea that pools of resources are made up of three elements: people (human capital), material (physical capital) and knowledge. Social capital is needed when pooling these resources. The latter is almost exclusively based on and passed through social networks.

According to Monge & Contractor (2004), networks are open structural systems of interconnected nodes. These nodes can be understood through the sociological concepts of strong and weak ties (Putnam, 2000). Strong ties, or bonds, are long-term, sustained and deep relationships among people that are likely to occur as a result of mutual philosophy of the world (e.g., scenes) or shared moments and events (e.g., international crises or a memorable birthday party).

Strong ties increase trust and offer more personalised forms of support. Sassen (2005) added that such kind of social relations in spatially concentrated clusters increase the efficiency of networks by mitigating transaction costs. Gu (2010) argued that these benefits could also be enjoyed at a distance. Nevertheless,

strong ties provide flexibility in the support given and increase the density and types of information exchanged because it conveys 'sociality'.<sup>73</sup>

Smart & Smart (2003) warned that being in networks made up of very strong ties could be a hindrance in accessing a large pool of resources, subsequently having a negative impact impeding the development of creative goods and services: Boschma (2005) named this innovative 'lock-in'. Having access to a large pool of resources happens by acquaintance with new, unfamiliar creative circles. These ties are known as 'weak ties' (Granovetter, 1973) or 'bridges' (Putnam, 2000). The idea is that 'cognitive distances' between a multitude of casual acquaintances helps to keep people informed with all sorts of information and exposes individual creatives to new ideas, knowledge, and skills that may not interest your tightly bonded social group. Brown, O'Connor & Cohen (2000) and Grandori (2001) place emphasis on prioritising weak ties over strong ones because weak ties are an important channel to accumulate all sorts of knowledge.

Van Heur's (2010a) study of Berlin and London electronic musicians concluded that "many of the nodes of [the electronic musician] networks are informal, temporally limited and partly hidden" (p. 102); he added that the strength of the social bonds are fluid: the bond between two people can be strong, weak or have no ties at different times. This fluidity is largely influenced by time and changing group dynamics, i.e., changing projects or site of activity. In response to (or as part of) these changes, creatives forge new links and nodes or discontinue others. At times, some bonded groups weaken their ties, or vice versa. McEvily & Zaheer (1999) considered that there is no doubt that a network structure rich in links to hubs and other networks is important in creating competitive capabilities within all industries.

Hracs, Grant, Haggett & Morton (2011) studied the synergy between groups of indie musicians and fashion designers in the Canadian cities of Toronto and Halifax. The majority of the creatives studied are co-workers who are brought together by their Toronto and/or Halifax connections (*via* people or venues) and their taste for indie-esque music and fashion. These co-workers may share some elements of place heritage and strong strands of cognitive proximity, but are they a closely bonded group? Possibly not, unless they go round to each other's houses and turn to each other during times of trouble. According to

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<sup>73</sup> Means for achieving sociality can be by "for example, high levels of personal investment, trust and support as the basis of these relationships, providing a sense of belonging and identity, and of course aesthetic validation" (Gu, 2010, p. 56). Of course, we should be aware that co-workers is a fuzzy term in the multi-nodal and entrepreneurial-driven cultural and creative industry, also that creatives can gain inspiration from people other than co-workers as well, such as family and possibly random strangers.

Putnam (2000), fewer than 10% of contacts with co-workers<sup>74</sup> are made through strong ties.

Venues like clubs are both a place to have fun with friends and for creatives another workplace (McRobbie, 2011). Gu (2010) spoke of Mancunian fashion designers in London Fashion Week building a relationship on the back of their Manchester roots. Becker (1982) states that sharing cognitive thought and aesthetic appreciation provides a “basis on which people can evaluate things in a reliable and dependable way, making regular patterns of cooperation possible” (p. 137), i.e., close cognitive proximity is a bonding tool. In theory, if everyone is acquainted with each other in the venue, potentially a variety of ideas could be shared and from which could a local creative economy could develop. As we will see in more detail later in this chapter, meeting places are important for the cultural and creative industries.

### Trust

Networking both strong and weak ties as a work practice is a norm and essential in any creative practice (Wittel, 2001; Gu, 2010). Polenske (2004) understood that one way to ‘prevent dissipation of the network’ is to develop measures of ‘trust’. Some creatives also have a tendency to keep records of past contacts to enable old links to be reactivated as part of the dynamic network structure. Reconnecting with old contacts also requires an element of trust to give confidence to reignite connections between the trustor and trustee. Being portrayed as trustworthy means improved contact, solidarity, and acceptance as a member of a community. Trust can be gained by sharing similar characteristics and histories (Gu, 2010) or from reputation (Schmitz, 1999).

It is useful to localise trust-based relationships in specific locations. With regard to the music industry, Watson (2007) suggests trust is built up through personal contacts, hence in his case-study of musicians he found a tendency for them to go to London to establish such contacts. If the creatives do not live in or visit London for a long time, personal contacts must be more intense and concentrated at certain events, and this is known as hypersocialisation (Currid, 2007). Such finding was backed up by van Heur's (2010b) study of Berlin and London electronic musicians. Travelling from other parts of the world primarily to network in London seems extreme and an inefficient use of time. However, it is worth remembering that core creative cities like London have multiple services, nodes and key actors (like cultural gatekeepers and socialites) which

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<sup>74</sup> Of course, we should be aware that co-workers is a fuzzy term in the multi-nodal and entrepreneurial-driven cultural and creative industry, also that creatives can gain inspiration from people other than co-workers as well, such as family and possibly random strangers.

cannot be found in many places. It is worth investing time to build trust in the cultural and creative industries of these rare cities. As Gu (2010) stresses:

*“This individual experience of risk tends to be managed through relationships of trust; these forms of social solidarity are often made more crucial in the absence of formal business training and support or of wider representative or organising structure [...] creative workers are frequently entrepreneurs with limited capital and business knowledge. Networks prove to be effective structures that provide sustenance to individual creative workers in the absence of crucial resources” (Gu, 2010, p. 58).*

Trust essentially enables people to allow access to ‘loops of information’, committing to cooperation, commissioning projects or consumers buying products (Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor & Raffo, 2000; Storper & Venables, 2004).

### **Face-to-face encounters**

It is not friendship, but hypersocialising (i.e., making fleeting<sup>75</sup> and intense contacts) in specific places, which is important in gaining trust and starting deep conversations. This is especially true for the contemporary cultural and creative industry where the environment is rapidly changing and not easily codified (Hall P., 1998; Wittel, 2001; Storper & Venables, 2004). According to Burke (2000) these hypersocialising spaces are best found in cities, as they have the historical function as crossroads and meeting-places. Effectively, the higher chance of initialising trust and hypersocialisation requires high frequency of personal encounters (McEvily & Zaheer, 1999; Currid, 2007).

Like networks, these face-to-face encounters are embedded in particular places (Brown, O'Connor & Cohen, 2000). Therefore, in theory, so-called creative milieus are good places for such activity in the cultural and creative industries. The physical hubs where information is exchanged are found to be clubs, gallery previews, after parties, and cafés. These places create a ‘buzz’ environment that attracts people to come together (Becker (1982); Storper & Venables, 2004; Currid, 2007). I call this ‘honeypotting’<sup>76</sup>. Jacobs (1961), Clark (2004), and Currid (2007) describe these places as having low barriers to social entry and as containers for various play activities, but also as extensions of the workplace.

However, the groups of people attracted to these honeypotting hubs are limited to certain profiles that share similar intellectual and aesthetic

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<sup>75</sup> Fleeting contact means meeting and acquainting with someone and exchanging information for a short moment of face-to-face encounter. The communication is never sustained after the encounter. Nevertheless, it is possible to make another fleeting contact with the same person if the same people are found at close geographical proximity.

<sup>76</sup> Honeypotting is a term borrowed from geography and tourism planning where a place is an area or place that is of special interest or appeal to groups of people, like tourists. At peak times, honeypot sites may become crowded, congested and noisy (Tiscali Encyclopaedia, 2009).

approaches/cogitation. McRobbie (2011) used the example of what she calls the “party circuit of ‘network of sociality’” (p. 33). Club nights are identified as hubs where people are attracted to a place at a certain time, like bees to a honey-pot or tourists to a tourist attraction. However, these hubs are not entirely inclusive; McRobbie noted that clubs had a tendency to exclude elders, parents and people of certain creeds, those who do not like the music of the club and those who do not want to pay the entrance fee. Creatives have their own networks, and these groupings are spatially separated because different groups have their own spatial niches and events.

It should not be assumed that clusters of people will be acquainted and talk with one another. There is also a space factor; Putnam (2000) noted that the Xerox queue at an office becomes a locus for the generation of social capital. Yet, the photocopier is less of a locus for interaction at midnight, when people are at home. Putnam’s observation could apply to the creatives if we consider creative milieu as a workplace. There are some spaces where people get together but are not allowed to talk<sup>77</sup> and others where people have a tendency to talk more.<sup>78</sup> Moreover, hubs for face-to-face meetings do not only rely on the space within the hub; time is also important. McEvily & Zaheer (1999) noted that hypersocialising and other forms of social networking could consist of temporary clustering, or brief meetings.

### **Network sociality**

An important aspect of trust building and networking is people’s practice of ‘catching up’ with banal exchanges of opinions and personal history not related to their work in the cultural and creative industry. These are things that serve to start a conversation, or relieve tension between people,<sup>79</sup> and enable the formation of weak bonds and the exchange of information. As we have seen in this chapter, face-to-face encounters are an extremely useful function in the cultural and creative industry. However, as Landry (2000) had pointed out “the nature of networking is changing as communities become more mobile and technologically connected” (p.1 26). Florida (2005) added, that as a way to eradicate the time-consuming exercise of commuting, there will be an increased reliance on mobile technologies as creative’s activities and peers will become more decentralised and localised in “*urban subcenters* [author’s italics] and far-

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<sup>77</sup> From my own experience it is rude to talk in an auditorium during a film screening or when a band is performing.

<sup>78</sup> Crowley & Reid’s (2002) study of socialisation during communism found that kitchen tables, café corners and the countryside were places where people talk to others more openly.

<sup>79</sup> Tension between two people previously unknown to each other could be from waiting for the other to start a conversation, fear of wasting time talking to someone potentially uninteresting to them, etc.

flung corners of the region” (p. 168). Socialising and building trust through face-to-face interactions are becoming increasingly difficult activities.

Wittel (2001) argued that the development of modern information and communications technologies (ICTs) allow the substitution of face-to-face encounters with virtual communication, especially with knowledge exchanging activities and networking. He called this network sociality. He noted that this phenomenon creates fleeting and intense contacts that are important in gaining trust and starting deep conversations through the medium of virtual networks and are ‘particularly visible’ in the cultural and creative industries. He went on to claim that network sociality has extra value in that virtual methods of communication are not geographically bounded. There are still restrictions in cognitive proximity; like any physical meeting in that we talk with those bonded by, what Wittel calls, similar cognitive selection and consumption. This effectively means that we visit and at times contribute to the same type of Internet forums, whether it is about graffiti or knitting, as we do go to similar events. Hereafter it is important for this thesis to explore to what extent virtual communicative platforms have replaced face-to-face meetings.

McRobbie (2011) added that network sociality is common in the contemporary world as society is ‘individualising’. She added that it is especially common in the entrepreneurial nature of the cultural and creative industries. Moreover, “network activity is geared towards being sociable and pleasing and endlessly self promoting in order to keep all opportunities open” (McRobbie, 2011, p. 34).

Just as with the ‘club circuit’ issue discussed in the previous section, Berners-Lee (2010) suggests a formation of ‘tribes’ in the virtual world. Communicating through social media has increased recently, especially since the dominance of social media, like Facebook and Twitter, creating ‘fragmented islands’ (Berners-Lee, 2010) whereby people with similar interests consume mostly the same information and are influenced normally from the same websites. The difference between club and Internet tribes is the scale, whereby the latter is often more globally dispersed. Consequently, these global Internet tribes are becoming more detached from their city and even national identity, and, therefore, these groups of people in the Internet tribes gradually lose touch and lessen trust with those physically around them. The possible result could be that less knowledge is exchanged during physical interaction.

The Internet appears to be an apt mode of communication for many businesses, especially in the cultural and creative industries. Yet, Storper & Venables (2004) cited evidence of an increase in periodical long-distance business travel from the beginning of the 21st century. Travelling long distances for face-to-face meetings was particularly useful for making new contacts, evaluation of the usefulness of a contact, and relationship adjustment, i.e., during a project. They explained there is a wide variety of information



exchanged *via* different ways of communicating during face-to-face contact, developing mutual understanding and getting to 'know' each other; this is because communicating verbal, visual and symbolic information through ICTs has limits. Besides, there is no scope for using touch and other uncodifiable information, such as body language (Ennis, McDonnell & O'Sullivan, 2010). The globalising world means that people have to travel more in order to perform face-to-face activities.

### **Travelling and migration**

There is a trend where people migrate towards established creative cities, like London, (Ban, Hansen & Huggins, 2003; Mahroum, 2000; Samers, 2002) because the 'industry' is concentrated there (Florida & Jackson, 2010; Watson, 2007). If we look at the music industry, the rationale for musicians migrating to London is because the city functions as the headquarters for four of the largest companies in the international music industry: Universal Music, Sony BMG Music, Warner Music, and EMI. Thus, there is a high concentration of cultural gatekeepers. As Noel Gallagher, a Mancunian and formerly of internationally renowned group, Oasis, explicitly hinted (NME, 2008):

*England is not that fucking great. England is a fucking shithole, to be honest. London is a fucking dump. It's full of crime, it's full of fucking tourists. I don't even know why I live here to be honest. I live here because the music industry is here.*

Noel Gallagher, aged 41 at the time of the quote, lived in London for over a decade but moved back to Manchester a year after he made that statement. Markusen & Gadwa (2010) have indeed shown that creatives have a tendency to move to a second order city or back to their hometown as they get older, regardless of whether they have established a reputation. For Noel Gallagher it is thought that it is because of his heritage, city loyalty, and to be closer to his mother.

It is clear that some factors such as closeness to family and friends, a job for a spouse or partner, good schools, affordable housing, shorter commuting distance, and less stress with child care, are generally significant considerations for some people at some times (Ban, Hansen & Huggins, 2003; Fertner, Giffinger, Kramar & Meijers, 2007; Hildreth, 2006). These factors could influence the decision to migrate and the direction of the migration. In fact, the complexity concerning individual migration is immense: different factors may be more salient for some groups than others, as well as influencing the length and time of movement, and the different push and pull factors that influence the volume, the frequency, the length, and the direction of mobility in the various channels (Mahroum, 2000).

Close geographical proximity to core cities like London is not only useful for networking with cultural gatekeepers or other non-creatives closely associated with the cultural and creative industry. Cities like London could also be important for access to creative markets, other activities that do not require a huge investment of personal time (such as hypersocialisation) and amenities that are not available in a creative's home city. Most of the time, they do not require long residence in such a city. Therefore, this thesis is interested in observing if creatives make short-term visits to core cities; if so, then for what purpose.

### **Representing the creatives**

We have established that virtual communication is not a comprehensive substitute for face-to-face encounters, and that hubs are becoming more spread out, which means creatives can spend much more time travelling when trust-building, cooperating on projects and exchanging vast amounts of information. The problem is that increased long-distance travel replaces time that could be used in producing creative products or services. Furthermore, not everyone is good or comfortable at networking. Therefore, there are times when creatives need people to represent them and collect information on their behalf.

Burke (2009) noticed a history of countries exploring and imposing culture through trade networks that date back centuries. They were normally organised at national level, historically through ambassadors and diplomats. Burke called them 'mediators' and 'wanderers'. They are essentially someone or a group of people who: travel around or live in different countries, makes new contacts and are the 'access point' for information and contacts for the place they are sent to. They often have good communication skills, with good accumulation of knowledge and are akin to networkers, socialites or the 'ice-breaker' employed by an events company (McRobbie, 2011).

Socialites are synonymous with social networkers at various places or websites and have the ability to move between hubs with the aim of sharing and accumulating information and contacts around the world. These types of people naturally combine the roles of: 'mediators', 'wanderers', residential ambassadors (Burke, 2009), 'centre-sponsored star' (Goyal, 2009), networkers and 'ice-breaker' for an events company (McRobbie, 2011); similar to those people purposely sent abroad through the diplomatic channels in the previous section. Therefore, this thesis will use the term socialites when describing people who have united creatives in different hubs, and explore their roles that they play in the cultural and creative industries and any problems that they face in linking creative hubs.

The literature reviewed in this chapter has indicated the importance of strong and especially of weak bonds in the formation of efficient networks. It has found evidence that networks operate through physical nodes and cities, and venues and locations within cities. While the rapid growth of virtual (Internet-based) communication and 'individualising', especially in the entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative industries, may be changing the role of physical travel and contact, there is evidence that face-to-face interaction remains essential at various phases of creative production. In the following chapter, evidence of people moving between cities for work purposes can be seen.

## Chapter 5: Cultural entrepreneurship in the Manchester and Brno context

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So far, this literature review has observed the diversity of creatives and their activities; it also hinted at the spatial and non-spatial relationships between creative entrepreneurs in a global cultural and creative industry 'ecosystem'. Nick Green's (1999) study applying complexity theory,<sup>80</sup> to the then immature East London cultural and creative industry,<sup>81</sup> showed that these apparently independent enterprises rely on social connections linking different cultures and networks (Green, 1999). What is not yet clear is the understanding of the conditions and infrastructures needed to enable these connections and to what extent are the connections contained in a city?

The cultural and creative industries are becoming increasingly important as a national development strategy (UNESCO, 2006), as is the entrepreneurial and self-promotional governance presented by David Harvey's (1989) entrepreneurial city concept. This chapter explores the economic and entrepreneurial aspects of the cultural and creative industries and contextualises the two different cultures of Manchester and Brno.

As we will see, Manchester and Brno have a similar urban-economic legacy: industrial pasts, they have faced deindustrialisation and have repositioned themselves; putting into practice some kind of 'entrepreneurial city' concept, albeit these processes have occurred at different time periods and at different scales. It will be evident that both Manchester and Brno adopted the entrepreneurial city approach to tackle their own shrinking city and globalisation issues, yet, their respective historical legacy left them with different physical outcomes. Despite Brno not residing in a relatively wealthier country<sup>82</sup> with advanced industries (e.g., the UK or USA), the shared transnational, 'global' policy phenomenon is what allows the comparative research in this thesis (Robinson, 2011b).

While both cities enjoyed relatively parallel urban-economic legacy and convergence in terms of an entrepreneurial city approach; did both Manchester and Brno creatives benefit in the same way? Or are there external factors (for example, the accession to the European Union) more influential in shaping a city's ability to facilitate cultural enterprise? This will be explored in the various sections at the beginning of this chapter as an introduction to Manchester and Brno playing their parts as entrepreneurial cities. The wider contexts considered in the '*comparing socio-economic profiling*' section are the political history,

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<sup>80</sup> See Byrne, 1998.

<sup>81</sup> At the time, East London comprised an array of creative sectors and *ad hoc* mixes of entrepreneurial organisations.

<sup>82</sup> Conversely, the Czech lands were always one of the most economically advanced, even before Communism, in the region. So in the Central Eastern European context it was always rather 'advanced'.

national economy, population makeup, adoption of communication technology and geographical location.

This chapter will then compare the UK and Czech Republic national governments' attitudes to the cultural and creative industries; then British and Czech consumption of creative goods and services. It will then zoom in from the national level of policy and activity to focus on the two city regions and show that the wider context has dramatically influenced the nature of the two cities' cultural and creative industry system. I will suggest that cultural entrepreneurship operates differently in the two case studies.

The literature review ends by reviewing typical 'creative areas' and explores where they could be located in both case study cities.

#### **Manchester and Brno as entrepreneurial cities: From government to governance**

Manchester and Brno may be the focus of this research, however, as previous chapters had hinted, "cities exist in a world of other cities" (Robinson, 2011b, p. 1). This is particularly the case in recent times whereby urban political economies are subjected to processes of globalisation; resulting in 'time-space compression' (Harvey, 1989; Smart & Smart, 2003; Stenning, 2004). This phenomenon is the basis for comparison of the two seemingly different European second order cities.

The ever-increasing shift in Europe from an industrial to a post-industrial society (i.e., based on service and ideas), combined with the mobility and rapid technological advancements in the past decades, has advanced the progress of compression of time-space distance (Florida, 2005). Hubbard & Hall (1998) and Bagnasco & Le Galès (2000) noted that this has had a profound impact on the relationship between communities in a given place. First, a common local place distinction and people's identity with 'their' place is lost and replaced with identification with particular local subcultures and/or deterritorialised social groups. Secondly, an individual or group's place identity is rarely restricted to an area or city boundary. In other words, local society is fragmenting into collectivities and territorial borders are less influential to an individual's membership in a community.

Consequently, any city must compete with other cities for investment and people. Observers such as, Hubbard & Hall (1998), Stenning (2004) and McCann & Ward (2011) have rightly pointed out that the running of a city is no longer about regulating and promoting welfare, but about facilitating, attracting or supporting private-sector agencies. Neoliberalism and the emergence of entrepreneurial cities have changed local government towards supporting forms of pro-growth *via* local economic development. David Harvey (1989) describes this kind of governance as "embedded in the logic of capitalist spatial

development” (as in Peck & Tickell, 2002, p. 46), labelling it ‘urban entrepreneurialism’, or the ‘entrepreneurial cities’. This thesis will only use the simpler term of entrepreneurial cities.

The policies of ‘entrepreneurial cities’ attempt to attract people and investment through economic incentives such as: enterprise zones,<sup>83</sup> branding, place marketing or marketisation of ‘high’ culture events and flagship developments; suggesting wider appeal and diversity, which ironically, lead to increased homogenisation, placelessness and global standardisation.<sup>84</sup> However, at the same time, these cities ‘stress their internationality’ and competitive selling points through pockets or enclaves, mega-structures or events, and ‘creating myths’ through brochures and websites.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, despite the tendency for place-making agencies to see the cultural and creative industries sector, as O’Connor has stated: ‘soft’, ‘volatile’ and ‘unbusinesslike’ (O’Connor J, 1998, p. 226), it is ostensibly becoming an important governance tool. One way is to use the geography of these industries as agents in giving the perception of ‘buzz’ within areas of the city; the aim is to attract investors’ attention and make the city into a ‘honeypot’ (Storper & Venables, 2004).

Many policies applied by entrepreneurial cities show similarities to cultural planning strategies (Cochrane, Peck and Tickell, 1996) and they have a tendency to attract creatives as entrepreneurs, because of their seemingly individualised practices, translocal movement patterns and heavy use of network sociality (Appadurai, 1996; Wittel, 2001; Gu, 2010; McRobbie, 2011). The prospect of expanding cultural businesses seems an attractive strategy for developing the local economy.

### **Manchester and the industrial revolution**

Manchester may be seen as one of the clearest historical examples of an entrepreneurial city. In his book, *Cities in Civilization: Culture, Technology and Urban Order* (1998), the urbanist Sir Peter Hall dedicated a whole chapter to Manchester, examining “how and why do innovative technologies, and innovative ways of industrial management, create new and innovative industries, bringing new waves and new ways of economic growth and how they come to develop in certain places at certain times?” (Hall P., 1998, p. 291). His case study was of Manchester during the 1775-1850 industrial revolution.

England’s third city,<sup>86</sup> Manchester, is located in northwest England and is described as “the quintessential city of the first industrial revolution in Britain”

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<sup>83</sup> Such as Hubbard & Hall, 1998; Peck & Tickell, 2002; Evans, 2004.

<sup>84</sup> Such as Relph, 1976; Hubbard, 1998; Champion, 2010; Biddulph, 2011; Peck, 2011.

<sup>85</sup> Such as Crilley, 1993; Hubbard & Hall, 1998; Kolbe, 2007.

<sup>86</sup> However, there is an argument for Manchester to be viewed as England’s Second City (BBC, 2007).

(Hall P., 1998, p. 307). Top-down interventions, geographical circumstances and local societal conditions made Manchester into the archetypal industrial city in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Britain was one of the leading countries in early industrial capitalism because its national government intervened to provide the legal and cultural foundations for 'proto-industrialization', production systems and appropriate infrastructure (Hall P., 1998; Hoppit, 2011). This reduced the start-up risk and enabled entrepreneurs to pioneer the industrial revolution.

Many large British cities exist because of the industrial revolution; however, Manchester is the best-known industrial city. Taylor et al. (1996) believe that this is due to its major contribution to the industrial revolution: the more reliable and well-dispersed transport network became a hub and there was less need for heavy investment to attract start-ups into the city. Peter Hall (1998) added that the type of natural resources and topography of the city was another important geographical contribution. The city's main industry at the time, cotton, co-evolved next door to a relatively sophisticated precision engineering complex. This physical clustering of economic activities allowed networking and synergy between mill-owners and mechanics, which led to innovations like locomotives and textile machines, such as the spinning jenny.

Britain's 'proto-industrialization' and Manchester's geographical circumstances were attractive to industrial entrepreneurs. By 1851, some 80,000 people were directly employed in the cotton industry<sup>87</sup> and there was a tenfold increase in the population of Manchester itself between 1760 and 1830 (from 17,000 to 180,000) (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996, p. 49). According to Hall (1998), skilled workers in other competing British and foreign cities were attracted to work in Manchester.

Hall's (1998) observations of the mill-owners and mechanic networks are significant. He said the city had an egalitarian ethos that was developed from expertise from Warrington Academy and acceptance of dissidents, a characteristic favouring nonconformist inventors and entrepreneurs (Hall P., 1998, p. 347). It was not enough to attract a large population: the conditions of the social system must also be nurtured for what Sir Peter Hall calls 'upstart urban places' like Manchester during the Industrial Revolution.

A darker side of Manchester's development also contributed to its international renown, since it was the locus of Friedrich Engels' (1987) *The condition of the working class in England*,<sup>88</sup> the first analytical account of the exploitation of

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<sup>87</sup> There were 1113 cotton mills in Britain, and 943 of them were in the Northwest Region (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996, p. 49).

<sup>88</sup> First published in 1845 in German, and then 1887 in English.

workers in a city of the new industrial capitalism, first published in 1845 (in German).

Finally, it is important to stress that the strong international dimension in Manchester's history from the beginning of industrialisation in the 18th century was based on the processing of imported cotton. The city and its region were enmeshed in international trade and this is expressed, for example, in the fact that one of its key public buildings was the Free Trade Hall. Manchester's international connectivity has been global and continuous for more than two centuries and, as we shall see, Brno's history is very different.

### **Brno's communist past**

Before discussing Brno's communist past, it is important to firstly acknowledge the limitations of secondary research in Central and Eastern European cities<sup>89</sup> because there is little research concerned with cities and even less focused on non-capital cities. Nevertheless, the universal impact of a cultural, social, political and economic phenomenon like communism is important in shaping entrepreneurs' trading and movement patterns, and ultimately a city's economic development. It is important to note that the idea of becoming an entrepreneur is a recent notion in the Czech Republic (Dlouhý & Mládek, 1994). This part of the thesis will provide an overview of literature that concerns pre-communist and the communist influence in Czech economic development and city development.<sup>90</sup>

Unlike Manchester, Brno was not a key city during the industrial revolution; it probably never made it to any footnotes to any key text on the origins of the industrial revolution. However, within the context of the Hapsburg Empire, the Czech lands were the most advanced area industrially. During the 15th and 16th century, the rise of commercial capitalism in Western Europe resulted in the opening-up to the New World and the growth of trade with Africa, Asia, and the Pacific regions. Capitalist trade took off in that period, making Central and Eastern Europe into a provider of food products to the growing industrial cities in Western Europe (Hann, 1995). However, in contrast, most cities in Central and Eastern Europe, after 1492, were becoming increasingly isolated from the broader 'global' developments (Hamilton 2005; Hamilton, Pichler-Milanović & Dimitrovska Andrews, 2005). The Central and Eastern Europeans' increased isolation in trade intensified during the eighteenth century when Central and Eastern Europe was divided into four empires, where trade routes were further

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<sup>89</sup> There were few research articles of Central and Eastern European cities in English.

<sup>90</sup> Unlike the historical study of Manchester, this literature review pays more attention to the general economic and city development of the country rather than the case study city. This is due to a lack of literature (in English) about Brno on the subject.



restricted. The anomalies were the large cities in regions close to the Western European border, such as Moravia,<sup>91</sup> which became important economic nodes (Myant, 2003). This was because Brno was one of the nearest cities to the Habsburg Empire's capital city of Vienna: Brno, in the Czech lands, now known today as the Czech Republic, was seen as 'Vienna's factory backyard' during the Habsburg Empire (Hamilton, 2005). Like Manchester, there was especially heavy top-down investment in rail and road infrastructure in Brno. Also, in other parts of Central and Eastern Europe, where railway construction was instrumental in opening up these markets in the raw material producing 'periphery' trade for Western Europe. Railways left many countries in Central and Eastern Europe in debt.

During communism, the Soviet Union accelerated the industrialisation of cities, at a much larger scale and at a much quicker rate than Manchester during the industrial revolution, and had direct control over the location of all new industries (Hamilton, 2005; Musil, 2005; Hamilton, Pichler-Milanović & Dimitrovska Andrews, 2005). Brno's main industries were producing firearms and corduroy<sup>92</sup> (Garb & Jackson, 2006), which dominated the south and western parts of the city. Contrary to the highly competitive capitalist and globally competitive industrialisation in Manchester, industrial communist cities were trading internally,<sup>93</sup> largely between other communist countries and industries and, once established, rarely modernised.

As Central and Eastern European cities industrialised, workers were needed to run and maintain factories; new towns were built and existing cities grew dramatically (French & Hamilton, 1979; Lizon, 1996). Before communism, most Czechs lived in rural areas; by the 1980s, the region that is now known as the Czech Republic recorded more than 70% of the population living in urban areas (Stenning, 2004; Hamilton, 2005). Regarding the expansion of existing cities like Brno, housing provision was a major priority (French & Hamilton, 1979; Lizon, 1996; Humphrey, 2005). Despite the large quantities of housing blocks built to supply the overwhelming housing demand,<sup>94</sup> flats and hostels,<sup>95</sup> were overcrowded. Humphrey (2005) used the example of the Soviet Union to exemplify this case of housing block provision for a growing urban population.

Crowley & Reid (2002) pointed out that if communist governments were to change how a person think and behave they needed change his or her material

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<sup>91</sup> Moravia, Bohemia, and Czech Silesia are regions that make up the Czech lands. Brno is located in the Moravian region.

<sup>92</sup> Corduroy was then locally known in Brno as 'Mancestr'.

<sup>93</sup> I.e., within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (Comecon), a Soviet Union-led economic organisation.

<sup>94</sup> The supply of blocks was also because it was a universal trend by many built environment practitioners at the time (Musil, 2005; Hamilton, Pichler-Milanović & Dimitrovska Andrews, 2005).

<sup>95</sup> Hostels were large blocks that were temporary accommodation for migrant, temporary workers. Each room housed more, then even more persons. Today, many are used as student accommodation.

surroundings. Thus, the architectural form of the city and planning of urban space were vested with a social-transformative role for ideological education of its residents. The configuration of cities was “the strongest factor for organizing the psyche of the masses” (Crowley & Reid, 2002, p. 11). Mass gatherings were prevented in public areas and new buildings were designed to symbolise the might of socialism. After the Prague Spring, the programme for political consolidation, social conformity, and a return to ‘normal, socialist life’ was officially referred to as ‘normalisation’ (Bren, 2002, p. 123). Normalisation refers to a kind of ‘compromise’ the communist regime reached with its population, after the Prague Spring, more consumerist opportunities in return for political conformism and ‘apathy’ in the public sphere.

The normalisation process also took place in informal cultural institutions like café corners (Benjamin, 1927), domestic spaces like: kitchen tables (Crowley & Reid, 2002), ‘communal space’ like stairwells (Humphrey, 2005) and to a certain extent the rural areas (Bren, 2002). These spaces are of anthropological interest because they were also dissident sites; all more or less ‘private or semi-private spaces’. These everyday spaces became habitual meeting places for exchanging information and ideas.

One everyday space used as a meeting place was the countryside.<sup>96</sup> Bren (2002) reported that rural areas were favoured destinations for two popular, initially illicit, leisure activities: ‘tramping’ and spending time in the ‘chata’ (see below for definition). Both were weekend activities in the countryside; it was normal to see cities emptying on Friday afternoon. Tramping is a largely young person’s movement where large groups meet, network and often discuss ideologies when camping in the countryside. Chatas are weekend houses in the countryside. At first, the authorities did not favour chatas because they were seen as complying with the ideology of capitalist, conservative, bourgeois values, therefore, it was seen as a form of resistance against the dominant politics to use them. Chatas were eventually legalised by the Czech authorities because of resistance and, unlike tramping, it was not seen as a ‘radicalising’ activity. The countryside suggests isolation, separateness and self-sufficiency. Bren (2002) commented that: “workers and students carved out their freedoms in the Czech countryside, using the images of a romantic pioneering America to live on their own terms during the weekends before returning to the aesthetic greyness and the social restrictions that awaited them in the city” (p. 129).

The communist and capitalist histories of Brno and Manchester respectively led both cities to heavily industrialised paths<sup>97</sup> as a result of which they became

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<sup>96</sup> The countryside may not yet seem relevant to this thesis. However, it should become clear during parts of the ethnography; especially, if there is a tendency for some people to spend some of their time in villages and other non-city locations.

<sup>97</sup> Brno’s industrialisation was late, albeit more rapid and at a larger scale than that of Manchester.

important hubs in regional industrialisation. What is noticeable is that the habitual nature of networking and the exchange and passing of ideas was different in both cases. It seems that Manchester has an element of self-reliant and reflective networks yet open to new ideas, Brno's networks on-the-other-hand were spread out and depended on planned cooperation across the Comecon area.

### **Convergence by entrepreneurialism: post-industrial and post-communist**

Despite the difference in rate of development and scale, Manchester and Brno do share a similar industrial history. The fact that they were both important large, industrial cities in their respective regions means that the 20th century deindustrialisation affected both cities.

Out of the two cases, deindustrialisation first transpired in Manchester because the city's openness to the global market meant that it was much more susceptible to the 1970s global recession and its textile industry was heavily exposed to competition from low-wage countries. Brno was relatively sheltered from deindustrialisation because of the internalised communist market (Comecon) and was not part of the capitalist world economy. Like a majority of large capitalist cities at the time, Manchester tried to divert itself towards service-based industries and become a logistic and business-services hub (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996; Cohen, 2007). The urban impact was the emergence of a huge number of brownfield sites caused by factories closing down. In addition, deindustrialisation led to long-term unemployment, out-migration and, ultimately, the 'shrinking city' phenomenon was becoming apparent (Sassen, 2000). The social and urban problems did not affect the whole of the Greater Manchester conurbation; the issues were felt particularly in the city of Salford and the warehousing districts like Ancoats, northwest of the city centre (Champion, 2010).

From 1991, EU funding<sup>98</sup> opportunities provided the Czechoslovak governments with the incentive to exercise economic 'shock therapy'.<sup>99</sup> This led to the rapid deindustrialisation of the 90s, a decade or two later than in Manchester. The result was a shifting of the economy towards attracting service-based industries and becoming a logistic hub like Manchester (Myant, 2003). To this day, Brno authorities are trying to establish the city as the Central and Eastern Europe logistic hub for multinational companies (Dingsdale, 2001;

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<sup>98</sup> European Union funding for non-EU nations, like former Czechoslovakia, were under systems of "Regional Development Agencies sponsored by the European Union PHARE programme and regional networks of business advisory centres aiming to assist in new firm formation" (Smith, 1996, p. 153).

<sup>99</sup> Economic 'shock therapy' is 'the sudden release of price and currency controls, withdrawal of state subsidies, and immediate trade liberalization within a country, usually also including large scale privatization of previously public owned assets' (Myant, 2003, p. 56).

Hamilton, 2005; Sýkora, 2006; czechinvest.org). During the production of this thesis, several business and technology parks were developed, for example, IBM is one of the multinational companies in one of the city's technology parks; however, it is too soon to conclude if Brno can be seen as the Central and Eastern Europe logistic hub for multinational companies.

Brno's post-communist urban and social change was similar to that of 1970s Manchester. The shift towards globally competitive and footloose enterprise meant government planners in both post-industrialisation and post-communist cases started using purely market-based instruments (Smith, 1996; Altrock, Güntner, Huning & Peters, 2006), i.e., increasingly adopting the model of the entrepreneurial city.

### **Comparing socio-economic profiling: economy and population**

The two case study cities are located in different parts of Europe that went through different political economic systems: the Western European Manchester went through liberal capitalism, while Brno spent about 50 years in a communist economic system. Following 1970s' global recession and the late-80s' fall of communism, both cities went through deindustrialisation and readjusted their political system to become entrepreneurial cities.

Despite both cities' efforts in shifting to a service economy, manufacturing was still amongst the top five of employers in the mid-2000s.<sup>100</sup> The other top employers in Brno were in the areas of logistics, education, construction and health care, whereas in Manchester it was in health care, leisure, finance, and transport.

Mancunians also benefited from the United Kingdom's stronger, highly developed, and diversified, market-based economy. In 2011, the UK was the second-largest economy in the European Union and a major international trading power (US Department of State, 2011b). The UK's heavy reliance on finance and business services enabled it to balance its deficits in trade but made it vulnerable to the international financial crisis. The Czech economy, being a strong exporter of consumer products, especially to the economically robust country of Germany (Hamilton, 2005) was relatively unscathed by crisis, with the full impact of the recession being delayed.

The 2009, GDP per capita of the United Kingdom was about €26,000 while the Czech Republic's GDP in the same period was about half of the UK's. Manchester and Brno's respective countries' economic state will shape the two

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<sup>100</sup> 13.2% of the Manchester working population was employed in manufacturing in 2008; 16.9% of the Brno working population was employed in manufacturing in 2006 (Manchester City Council, 2008; Czech Statistical Office, 2010).

cities' industrial profiling and economy; however, both cities' relationship with surrounding cities is equally useful comparisons to understand the economic differences between the two case studies. The difference in GDP between the two is wider when comparing at county level: Greater Manchester's per-capita GDP is 90% higher than South Moravia<sup>101</sup> (Czech Statistical Office, 2010; Fact Monster, 2011).

Both Manchester and Brno are often referred to as important 'alternative capital' cities (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996; Altrock, Güntner, Huning & Peters, 2006), and capital cities of their region: North West England and South Moravia respectively. Consequently, they have largely national autonomy and were considered as the 'headquarter city' in their regions (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996; czechinvest.org). Other similarities are, both: are university cities, have large retail shopping catchment areas, have regional courts, major transport hubs, strong historical<sup>102</sup> and strong sporting identity (in English football and Czech Ice Hockey).

When compared to Brno, Manchester has a larger and broader labour-market economy, and because of this fact, better career opportunities; therefore, the city is more attractive to highly skilled immigrants (Ban et al, 2003; Mahroum, 2002), which results in larger, more varied skill pools and a cosmopolitan population. Another factor in Manchester's ethnic diversity is Britain's colonial past: economic migrants from Pakistan, India and Hong Kong were three of the top five countries of origin of the immigrant population in North West England in 2008 (approximately 58,000, 48,000 and 15,000 respectively).<sup>103</sup> In comparison, the South Moravian population is more monocultural, whereby the immigrant population in 2008 consisted mainly of white Eastern Europeans.<sup>104</sup> The large Vietnamese<sup>105</sup> population is an anomaly (but at the same time a specific socialist phenomenon) because of the shared communist past of Vietnam and Czechoslovakia (the predecessor of Czech Republic and Slovakia combined) as a result of which Vietnamese workers came to Czechoslovakia (O'Connor C., 2012). Brno's attempt to become a hub for international companies in services (czechinvest.org) has attracted multinational companies, like IBM, to relocate to the city, which has brought in more foreigners to the city. As a consequence of the different pull of migrant workers, Manchester has benefited more from 'brain gain' (Mahroum, 2002) than Brno, leading to an

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<sup>101</sup> The investment bias towards Prague led to the imbalance in the Czech GDP (Dunford, 2005), where Prague's GDP per capita was about €32,000 while Czech Republic's second city (Brno) was about 2,000 GDP per capita (Eurostat, 2005).

<sup>102</sup> For example, Manchester's Battle of Peterloo (Hernon, 2006) and Brno's alternative rural life (Vaishar & Zapletalová, 2009).

<sup>103</sup> The people from other countries were the Polish (37,000) and Germans (25,000). N.B., Black Britons originated from various African and Caribbean countries (80,600; 1.1%) as a whole in the population of Northwest England based on the 2011 Census (Office for National Statistics, 2011).

<sup>104</sup> Ukrainians (rounded to 13,000), Slovaks (7,000), Russians (800) and Polish people (600).

<sup>105</sup> Vietnamese in 2008 was about 4,000.

increase in the level of anchorage and knowledge and service industries found in the former.

Despite Manchester's superior economic might over Brno, both cities suffer from long-term unemployment and an aging population caused by out-migration and low fertility rates (Altrock, Güntner, Huning & Peters, 2006; Sýkora, 2006). In the case of Brno, government and its citizens were not well prepared for the severity of the process of deindustrialisation, which took place in the 1990s. The communist legacy had a profound impact on Brno's urban environment, arguably more than the scars left in deindustrialised Manchester: there are vast amounts of contaminated brownfield land, more than in London, for instance,<sup>106</sup> especially to the east and south of the city, left by the local government because it has little experience in strategic planning, marketing and land preparation (Garb & Jackson, 2006; Sýkora, 2006). Many government policies towards restructuring of industries and enterprises were more based on trial and error and dominated by *ad hoc* interventions (Myant, 2003). The results were urban sprawl and out-of-town retail and enterprise parks reinforced by the residents' desire to larger rural living quarters, i.e., suburban living, (Sýkora, 2006). Regeneration and investment funds were insufficient, therefore, conditions in areas with large immigrant population and in the poorer residential districts deteriorated (Oberti, 2000). The spreading out of population and land uses meant that many new areas have poor accessibility and low intensities of interaction due to low density.

Today, Manchester is more densely populated than Brno, whereby the surface area of the city of Manchester<sup>107,108</sup> is 116 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 458,100; while that of Brno is 230 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 367,000 (US Department of State, 2011a; 2011b). In a sense, Brno has been both an expanding and shrinking city: its population was scattered because of urban sprawl and government's inability to manage brownfield land. Brno's population is clustered into pockets through the area: the old industrial areas, especially to the south and east, are mostly derelict and occupied by the Roma population<sup>109</sup> and/or the very poor. The moderately wealthier and rich Brnoites were generally concentrated in pockets to the north and west (Sýkora, 2006). The population spread of Manchester has not been as extreme as in Brno. However, there are patches of under-populated areas particularly in the former industrial areas;

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<sup>106</sup> "Central Europe have two to three times the amount of space devoted to current or past industrial uses than their western counterparts" (Garb & Jackson, 2006, p. 274).

<sup>107</sup> Please note that Manchester is part of the Greater Manchester conurbation, which has an area of 1300 km<sup>2</sup> and approximately 2.5 million in population (US department of state, 2011b).

<sup>108</sup> The eastern part of the city of Salford, which is on the border of Manchester, is another important part of this research. Salford's area size is 97 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 218,000 (US Department of State, 2011b).

<sup>109</sup> An 'underclass' in Central and Eastern Europe.

however, unlike in Brno, there are serious attempts to regenerate such areas, like the CHIP development in Ancoats (Champion, 2010).

Trading in an international economy was another contributing factor of Brno's problems caused by its communist legacy. The Czech Republic's main trade partners are still its neighbours and other former communist countries (Myant, 2003; Hamilton, 2005). Despite managing to attract some multinational companies like IBM, it has been suggested to me<sup>110</sup> that the lack of partners has to do with the restricted business networks after the Velvet Revolution. In contrast to Brno's inexperience with entrepreneurial policymaking, Manchester's experience during the industrial revolution and its generally adaptive business culture (Hall P., 1998; Myant, 2003; Garb & Jackson, 2006) have proved invaluable when adjusting to economic change. One area for further study is how the trade patterns between the two nations affect Manchester and Brno's city profile and global economic movement patterns. Especially, there has been this crucial difference that Manchester formed part of a capitalist system and Brno of a self-contained separate socialist system.

#### **Comparing socio-economic profiling: geography and trade**

Manchester and Brno's dominance in their respective region are increasing. This is strengthened by the improvement and the emergence of further means of communicative infrastructure (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996; Oberti, 2000; Myant, 2003). Cities surrounding Manchester or Brno are increasingly reliant on them. At the same time, the increased use of communicative infrastructure is making Manchester and Brno more dependent on other cities around the world (Wittel, 2001; Storper & Venables, 2004), producing an imbalance among hubs, such as in the case of publishing, where there is a tendency towards concentration in cultural metropolises like Paris and London (Hall P., 1999; McRobbie, 2010; Rantisi & Leslie, 2010). Taylor, Evans & Fraser (1996) pointed out that there is an "ever-increasing population of weekend commuters"<sup>111</sup> (p. 7) between Manchester and cities like Sheffield, whereby Manchester is the weekday city for work. Manchester may be a commuter destination; however, it can also be a home for commuters. Cohen's 2007 comparison of Liverpool and Manchester musicians states that the Mancunians are more self-sustainable than their Liverpoolian counterparts; however, they still are reliant on the London-based music industry. Manchester and Brno being used as a 'commuter city' or a city to commute to may be an important consideration.

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<sup>110</sup> In an interview with Czech Invest London regional office on 16th March 2012.

<sup>111</sup> 'Weekend commuters' are working in one town, paying mortgage on a property elsewhere, returning 'home' on a weekend (Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996, p. 7).

Dunford's (2005) comment on Central and Eastern European capital cities' strong influence over other cities within the country, more than in Western Europe, would suggest that Prague's authority on Brno is stronger than London's authority on Manchester. Yet, national influences are not the only ones in Brno; others include neighbouring large cities and the EU. Brno's geographic location and the post-1990 opening of Europe's borders led to activities and movements being directed increasingly to other nearby large cities such as Vienna, Munich, Berlin, Budapest, and Bratislava, but also to cities further afield like London. Hamilton (2005) asserted that passenger and cargo traffic in Prague doubled between 1989 and 1997, but still insists that Berlin and Vienna are still important air traffic hubs for Central and Eastern European cities like Brno. Kolbe (2007) wrote: "national borders have lost their significance" (p. 107); if true, one may ask how Manchester is affected by cities outside England. Dingsdale (2001) suggested Brno may not be as economically self-sufficient as Manchester, but the city can distance itself from Prague easier than Manchester from London, because of its strong regional identity and the fact that it is surrounded by many other large cities.

The Czech Republic's capital city, Prague, may thus not be the only city with influence on Brno; nevertheless, it has had a profound influence on other Czech cities. After years of Moscow influence, the 1990s saw the rise of Czech nationalism that placed emphasis on building Prague's identity, and political and economic transformation (Sýkora, 2006; Kolbe, 2007). This created huge inequality in city development of second order cities and smaller places (Dunford, 2005). The governmental emphasis of promoting Czech nationalism through Prague meant other Czech cities had to be more reliant on development via non-governmental funding. Dingsdale (2001) looked into the potential outcome of this transformation into an entrepreneurial city (Harvey, 1989) and concluded with the notion of 'winner' and 'loser' cities. The classification is largely influenced by infrastructure already in place to attract foreign investment. He hypothesised that Brno would be a 'winner' because of its transport accessibility to and from Western Europe.

### **The Internet**

Chapter four emphasised the growing global influence on cities. This section concentrates on the Internet's influence on Manchester and Brno, with respect to other cities and how these relationships may be changing.

Many authors in this literature review<sup>112</sup> agree that Manchester's political decisions, economic activities, and traffic and movement of people is more influenced by London than by other British cities; Brno's population and

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<sup>112</sup> Such as Taylor, Evans & Fraser, 1996; Cohen 2007; McRobbie, 2010.



decision-makers are swayed by a much wider range of cities such as Vienna, Bratislava, Moscow and even London (Hamilton, 2005; Kolbe, 2007). There are three important aspects to Brno's wider urban network. First, as mentioned previously, the larger GDP of Manchester than that of Brno means that Manchester could be of higher self-sufficiency than its counterpart: it is simply a bigger economy. Secondly, the increasing and modernising virtual infrastructure in the Czech Republic allows those from Brno to participate in the 'network society' (Castells & Cardoso, 2005), which is important in the rapid attainment of information, the extension of 'brain circulation'<sup>113</sup> (Cao, 1996), and the connection of Brno businesses with economic hubs that are missing in the Czech Republic. Finally, Brno's geographical location at the centre of Europe, as compared to that of Manchester's North West position on a West European island, means Brno is physically connected to many more cities. We will contextualise the latter two factors in more detail, in the following sections.

Castells & Cardoso's (2005) study on the 'network society' places huge emphasis on the virtual presence. However, their study suggests an uneven distribution of Internet users (in 2003), generally favouring young people from North America and Western Europe and restricting the influence of major economic hubs, such as London and New York, on regions like Central Eastern Europe. More recent studies on Internet usage<sup>114</sup> have suggested that on average 65% of the working population in both the UK and Czech Republic are now regular Internet users. If we look at the distribution of Internet usage between 16 and 74 year olds, Seybert & Löff (2010) report that 89% of both British and Czechs use e-mails; while there are 21% more regular international phone/video call users from the Czech Republic than from the UK. It is presumed that Czechs who migrated out of the country in 2009 are more likely to use the Internet as a way to interact, inform, and communicate with friends and family. Especially, social media and voice-over-Internet Protocol services are more widely used than previous years.

The European Social Survey (2010) data reports that 76% of 16 to 24 year olds in both countries communicate through forums, blogs, and social networking sites. The average percentage of Czechs communicating through the same medium from the ages of 25 to 54 was only 33%, while in the UK it was 42% (Seybert & Löff, 2010). Communication through the Internet appears not to be largely used as a means of communication by older Czechs. The Czech Republic has a clearer generation gap in terms of virtual presence than the UK. The young people's increased dependency on virtual communication means that sharing information among cohorts would be more generationally limited.

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<sup>113</sup> Brain circulation is when skilled labours emigrate to another country, learn new skills in their adopted country. Once they return to their home country, the persons will pass on the new learnt skills from the adopted country.

<sup>114</sup> Such as Seybert & Löff, 2010.

Information exclusion is not only generational; Berners-Lee (2010) is concerned that the dominance of social media as a way to gather information has created 'fragmented islands'. This means that sources of information are restricted to specific people (or organisations) 'friended', 'subscribed' or 'followed' on social media sites. This often directs a person to certain information or websites. Berners-Lee (2010) is concerned that the habit of 'surfing the net' for different opinions or new subjects should be discouraged, otherwise a tribe of information networks could occur.

Both Manchester and Brno are influential cities within their regions. However, increased time-space compression means that other national and international centres, their respective capital cities, as well as other larger cities could influence the city development; the inhabitant's working behaviour and economic competitiveness of Manchester and Brno. It is important to be more considerate to how the rapid time-space compression may relate to other cities around the world.

We next consider if Brno's cooperative habitual working behaviour, unrestricted by its city boundaries as it is, may be more beneficial than the largely inward-looking Manchester production system for a globalised cultural and creative industry.

An assumption that could be drawn above is that both cities are playing on a level (economic-political) playing field when developing the cultural and creative industry. However, the next section will look at the UK and Czech Republic development of the cultural and creative industries, which suggests a different conclusion.

#### **The UK national arts bodies' history, and the structure of the creative and culture sectors**

We have already seen that Manchester and Brno have gone through different economic histories and underwent industrial development at different times, but, that they are slowly converging since post-communism and the modern time-space compression. Yet, the historical differences have left different work habits. The following sections focus on the cultural and creative industries and their working tendencies in the UK and Czech Republic.

In the UK, the first national body supporting the arts,<sup>115</sup> museums, galleries and cultural venues was established in 1940; it was first known as the Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts and is considered to be the first arts agency in the world to distribute government funds at "arm's-length" from politicians (Fisher & Figueira, 2011, p. 2). Subsequently such bodies were

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<sup>115</sup> The supported artforms from 1940 to the 1970s were mainly highbrow art and music. A series of debates in the 1970s expanded on what forms of arts and culture are subsidised.

referred to as: “Non-Departmental Public Bodies” (NDPBs).<sup>116</sup> For details of how the name, structure and purpose changed over time: See Fisher & Figueira, 2011.

The first significant change of approach to culture at government level, of direct importance to this study, occurred in the 1980s. The Thatcher government’s neoliberal approach encouraged cultural establishments and creatives to seek private funding and pushed them towards entrepreneurialism. Moreover, ‘culture as leisure’ and ‘culture for tourists’ were used as tools in enhancing the economic competitiveness of a city, i.e., towards entrepreneurial cities (O’Connor, 1998; Edensor, Leslie, Millington & Rantisi, 2010). Peck (2011) noted that not all English cities in the 1980s adopted the ‘neoliberal urbanism’ approach;<sup>117</sup> nevertheless, it became widely adopted from the 1990s onwards. Another important change has been to move the government’s responsibility for cultural matters to a new department, now known as The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).

The cultural policy direction of the New Labour era from 1997-2010<sup>118</sup> carried on with the neoliberal direction of the Thatcher government, by promoting funding from other non-governmental sources such as the National Lottery and setting up the 1997 Creative Industries Task Force, which raised awareness of the economic value of the industries through the practice of ‘economic mapping’ of the nation’s cultural and creative industries. Since the mid-2000s, culture has acquired an important additional role in governance: the DCMS began to “contribute to the achievement of wider government objectives, such as promoting social inclusion and neighbourhood renewal and its increasing commitment to investment in cultural (i.e., human) capital” (Fisher & Figueira, 2011, p. 21). At the time of writing this thesis, the DCMS and NDPBs has to work with a range of governmental departments, across sectors and at many national and world scales. The regional scale governance was especially promoted, and the NDPB arts agency shifted from a single British body to three bodies; Arts Council of England, Arts Council of Wales and the Scottish Arts Council, with regional offices. An emerging or established Mancunian creative would normally seek funding from both Arts Council England and the North West Council, as well as privately and from European funds.

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<sup>116</sup> Also known as Quasi Autonomous Non Governmental Organisation (quango). The British Council is the UK NDPBs, while the Czech Centre would be the Czech counterpart.

<sup>117</sup> Sheffield took a ‘creative cities/municipal socialism’ approach in the 1980s (see Peck, 2011).

<sup>118</sup> The year that New Labour ceased to exist is subjective.

### Comparing the Czech Republic national arts bodies' history, and the structure of the creative and culture sectors with the UK

The UK government's involvement with cultural policy is relatively well established and structured. This is not the same for the Czech case. Petrová (2011) and Burke (2000) have pointed out that the Czech Republic has a "dense network of ideologically controlled and endowed cultural facilities" (Petrová, 2011, p. 2), such as, libraries and cultural centres, which were created under socialism and which continue to form a loose structure for the sharing of cultural information. However, they have been privatised and denationalised after the 1989 Velvet Revolution, which has made national cultural policy much less coordinated and more incoherent (Petrová, 2011).

UK: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport	Czech Republic: Ministry of Culture
The Creative Economy Programme: the DCMS' goal to make the UK the world's creative hub	Art support (not rigorously defined)
The DCMS working closely with key players across the government to address and monitor policy that affects the creative industries, sports and media	The Ministry of Culture work with other ministries, mainly the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other bodies of state administration
Exporting goods and services to overseas markets	Support and promote the production and trade in the area of culture
Skills development and training in the creative industries	Encouraging cultural and educational activities, including churches and religious societies
Maintaining cultural monuments and venues, such as, libraries and galleries	Maintaining cultural monuments and venues such as libraries and galleries
Regional support and development	Deal with matters relating to the press, including publication of the non-periodical press and other information means
Tax and regulation: DCMS working with HM Revenue and Customs on issues of taxation and regulation that affect the creative industries	The preparation of draft laws and other legal regulations in the area of radio and television broadcasting
Intellectual property rights issues	Implementation of the Copyright Act

Figure 6: Table comparing UK and Czech arts bodies' responsibilities. Aaron Mo compiled the information from information in Fisher & Figueira (2011, p. 31) and Petrová (2011, p. 8).

The Czech national government does have a Ministry of Culture (MC). Figure 6 suggests both MC and DCMS have similar legal roles and require

intragovernmental cooperation, but leave undefined as to what constitutes culture and how it should function. The noticeable difference is that the MC's role is more unclear when compared with the UK's DCMS: there is a focus on building Czech national identity (Myant, 2003), while the UK uses culture as an economic vehicle in a globalised world. The difference in focus is reflected in policy whereby the UK focuses on supporting 'creative hubs' as opposed to Czech's main emphasis on preserving the existing cultural infrastructure.<sup>119</sup>

Czech culture policy may be focused on the development of national identity; yet, it has recently shown some interest in the cultural and creative industry as an economic tool.<sup>120</sup> Interest came as early as 1996 (two years before the DCMS' highly influential Creative Industries Mapping Document) when the MC issued the White Book, which is "a study that clarified the relation of the state to culture and gave examples of cultural policies from other European countries" (Petrová, 2011, p. 2). However, the first government policy on culture never mentioned cultural and creative industries and did not come until 1999. According to Petrová (2011), the first economic mapping of the Czech cultural and creative industries is expected in 2012.<sup>121</sup>

The British government may encourage British creatives to be entrepreneurial and offer various sources of funding; nevertheless, the DCMS makes a contribution of just under £1.5-2 billion (Fisher & Figueira, 2011). This is a considerable amount if you compare the figures to the Czech contribution of approximately quarter of a billion pounds (Petrová, 2011) and the fact that Czech creatives have no other sources equivalent to the British National Lottery funding grants, for example.

The limited funds for the Czech cultural and creative industries and the emphasis on culture's function with national identity meant creatives had to find money in other ways, such as from other governmental departments, which could divert them from focusing purely on the arts. The Czech study scholarship scheme is a good example where it is one of a few direct funds for young creatives.<sup>122</sup> It includes a study residence for at least one month at a significant art, science or other specialised workplace (Petrová, 2011, p. 57). Support for

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<sup>119</sup> The cultural infrastructure mainly caters for highbrow culture and located in Prague (Petrová, 2010).

<sup>120</sup> The interest in the cultural and creative industry stops short of using culture as a regeneration and sustainable community tool (Sýkora, 2006).

<sup>121</sup> The economic mapping of Czech cultural and creative industries, and the creation of the 2009-2014 National Cultural Policy, had been produced as this thesis is being written (Petrová, 2011; Czech News Agency, 2012). Of course, this thesis is not able to consider these influential documents, as fieldwork was done before the economic mapping exercise. In addition, it must be noted that some of the fieldwork findings may no longer apply. For example, the restricted cultural funds and government restructuring caused by both the UK and Czech Republic recent austerity cuts will inevitably impact differently on certain cultural sectors.

<sup>122</sup> The study scholarship is offered to people up to the age of 35, therefore provides another obstacle for older creatives working in the industry.

individual artists is very limited compared with the support for cultural institutions and some industries.<sup>123</sup>

The Czech Republic's lack of support for the cultural and creative industries, when compared to the UK, is reflected by the numbers of people training to be creatives. For instance, during the 2007/08 academic year, there were 725,000 students in Europe who were registered as studying an artistic subject. Of those 6.8% students per head of national population went to the UK, while 1.9% students per head of national population studied in Czech Republic (Eurostat, 2011a).

### **Creative market and consumption**

In terms of annual household spending in 2005, the United Kingdom is one of the highest in Europe. But when analysing the total household expenditure, Czechs are more willing to spend on culture than the UK: 5% of household expenditure goes to culture in the Czech Republic, compared with 4-5% in the United Kingdom.

Purchasing power of Central and Eastern European customers is a fraction of Western Europeans (Garb & Dybicz, 2006). Yet, there is growth in spending on goods, which is indicated by the mushrooming of retail developments, in the form of 'box-box' shopping malls that hold the generic chain shops (including bookshops), found outside the city centre. Large numbers of shoppers had, consequently, moved out of the city centre. This is not good for a wider creative market in Brno. Garb & Dybicz (2006) state that creative products, are normally sold through higher-order retails and boutiques, which are consumed in Central and Eastern European city centres. Consequently, there are fewer potential consumers in the Central and Eastern European creative market.

It appears that the UK has an established cultural and creative industries structure that serves a large market, more than in the Czech Republic. Therefore, it is presumed that there are more market incentives for creatives working in the UK.

This tentative conclusion was backed up when the DCMS claimed in 2011 "1.5 million people were employed in the cultural and creative industries or in creative roles in other industries" (p. 5). While, data for 2009 claimed 30,526 people in Czech Republic are employed in the cultural sector, many of which are employed in governmental institutions (Petrová, 2011, p. 33). Petrová (2011) suggested that the low number of workers in the creative sectors was because "wages of employees in the cultural sector fall below the national

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<sup>123</sup> In the mid-2000s, both the UK and the Czech Republic invested relatively heavily on their respective film industry (Fisher & Figueira, 2011; Petrová, 2011).

average” (p. 33) and the temptation is to move abroad to find more favourable conditions, such as a good local creative market.

### **International relationships of Czech and UK culture**

A running theme of this thesis is the global nature of ‘culture’ and the globalised ‘creative ecosystem’. This means that UK and Czech creatives are likely to cooperate with people from other nations. This section will look at the national governments’ approach to international cooperation, as this could establish networks and influence a creative’s movement pattern.

Fisher & Figueira (2011) claim: “a considerable amount of international cultural co-operation [by the UK] is undertaken by individuals and organisations through networks, exchanges and personal contact” (p. 14). The nature of UK cooperation is normally ‘to do business overseas’, where they promote and trade with allies or use culture as part of diplomatic efforts (e.g., the British Council, established in 1934).

Czech international cultural cooperation increased after the Velvet Revolution and further grew just before the Czech Republic’s accession into the European Union because these were the conditions for bringing in additional European funds. Like the UK, the Czech Republic has also recently used culture as part of diplomatic efforts (the Czech Centre, established in 1993), however, the majority of the cooperation is in the form of international collaborations to access European funding: According to Petrová (2011), “Czech foreign cooperation is quite fragmented and lacks a clear vision” (p.11). Important sources of funding include; the PHARE programme, the Visegrád Group,<sup>124</sup> European Economic Area and Norway Grants,<sup>125</sup> which all put an emphasis on international collaborations (Smith, 1996; Altrock, Güntner, Huning & Peters, 2006; Petrová, 2011). All require working in English, German or the French language. However, the majority of Czech creatives are Czech; their official language is the Czech language; the second-largest language by number of speakers (after the Czech language) is the Slovak language followed by Polish, German, Vietnamese and Romany. Many Czechs’ second working language is officially Slovak (Petrová, 2011, p. 17 & 26). These cultural funds could thus be unobtainable to some Czech creatives as explained by Petrová (2011); her comment also stresses that there is ‘very intensive cooperation with Slovakia’ because of the shared Czechoslovakian history. These language issues and

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<sup>124</sup> Regular meetings of culture ministers from Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Poland in order to exchange experiences in the sphere of cultural policy.

<sup>125</sup> Under this agreement a new financing mechanism was introduced wherein the EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway) in 2004-2009 contributed to countries just joining the EEA for projects in the expanded internal market (Petrová, 2011, p. 13)

similar cultural references will be seen as important in the empirical part of the thesis.

In summary, language could be an important issue whereby Czech creatives could be at a disadvantage when compared with their UK counterparts. The UK official language, English, is widely seen by many people as the 'international language'. Many people speak some form of the English language when living and travelling abroad.

The 'international language' situation may favour UK creatives and government for international cultural cooperation but the UK's apparent preference to export British culture instead of forming collaborations (Fisher & Figueira, 2011) means that it does not encourage UK creatives to use International cultural funds. For instance, both the UK and Czech Republic are founding members of UNESCO, but the United Kingdom has had a 12-year absence from the UNESCO membership between 1985 and 1997 because of financial and political differences (Fisher & Figueira, 2011, p. 18). The purpose of Czech international cooperation is not only gaining funds, but also building relations, common interests, developing a market (particularly in Czech movies), and sustaining international and regional mobility (Petrová, 2011). In the UK, despite the incentives and language bias there is a preference to promote UK-originated, not European cooperative, products.

If we compare the state of the cultural and creative industry in the UK and Czech Republic, it appears that the more established UK cultural and creative industries are placed in higher esteem in national governance and have developed a relatively mature creative market with many trading partners. In theory the UK cultural and creative industries should be well equipped at facilitating those who choose to work as creatives either as entrepreneurs or in the public sector; whereas the Czech cultural and creative industries cater less for enterprise and more for state agendas like national identity and diplomacy (Petrová, 2011, p. 33). This would suggest that the UK's cultural and creative industry foundations enable Manchester to develop as an entrepreneurial city based on creative enterprise, while the Czech creative enterprises suffer from limited financial and infrastructural support for their activities.

#### **Manchester as self-reliant and reflective creative city**

This chapter started by examining entrepreneurial cities, which theoretically suit the entrepreneurial tendencies of creatives (McRobbie, 2011). It then compared some of the British and Czech trading and other tendencies. Finally, the national authority's approaches to UK and Czech cultural and creative industries were reviewed to highlight the more formal networks for funding and cooperation that are and are not accessible to Manchester and Czech



creatives. The following section will provide a brief historical overview of cultural production in Manchester and then Brno. This will then be examined in detail in the following two sections and will help us to understand how the more self-reliant nature of the UK may have an impact on Manchester creatives' activities. Conversely, the interdependence amongst many cities of the Czech Republic (and the Comecon region) may influence the methodology and/or location Brno creatives' activities.

O'Connor & Gu (2010) have pointed out that "Manchester has the largest cultural and creative industries sector in England outside London, and its cultural and creative industries sector continues to grow" (p. 124). Manchester is particularly strong in performance, media and music sectors<sup>126</sup> (Brown, O'Connor & Cohen, 2000). We will only look at a contemporary overview of Manchester's music heritage (arguably the richest sector) to indicate the city's creative production system, which we argue tends to be self-reliant and reflective.

Manchester has had four recognisable music scenes and movements: Northern Soul in the 1960s; Post-punk in the 1970s; Acid House/Rave/'Madchester'/Baggy (80s - early 90s); and Britpop from the mid-1990s. These different alternative music movements together constitute a distinctive 'Manchester sound' (Cohen, 2007). Cohen (2007) notes that those musicians she interviewed "described Manchester as wealthier than Liverpool and suggested that its population tended to be better travelled and more open-minded. Consequently, they suggested Manchester rock music revealed a variety of influences" (p. 63). That is, there is synergy similar to the innovations that occurred during the industrial revolution. The closely networked sets of people that are based in Greater Manchester were strong enough to retain influential creatives in the city; the network was capable of absorbing outside influence and reflecting on their underlining ideology:

*"[T]he ways in which individuals from Manchester's cultural industries respond to problems is indeed shaped by grounded and situated, reflexive, hands-on learning experience; the individual cognitive reflection alluded to by [Antony Giddens (1991) in Modernity and Self-identity]" (Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor & Raffo, 2000, p. 456).*

In an interview with a Manchester-based DJ, Sara Cohen noted why the 'Manchester sound' is seen as fresh and able to adapt to different music tastes over the decades; similar cities with a good musical heritage, such as Liverpool, are seen as more stagnant and less open to change in terms of music genres. The consistency of 'Manchester sound' exists because of the city's ability to keep the influential musicians in Manchester:

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<sup>126</sup> There are some well-known creatives outside of the three sectors. A notable example is the artist LS Lowry (Waters, 1999). However, he did not receive international acclaim because of his refusal to leave and exhibit work outside Manchester.

*“There’s that sort of tradition of people coming to Manchester with an idea and it succeeding without them having to sell out. Whereas in, say, Liverpool there’s like, well, even [T]he Beatles and Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Liverpool groups, had to go to London to make it. The groups that were left just seemed sad. It’s like a bitter circle. Once Frankie Goes To Hollywood go to London, then the interest moves away from Liverpool, you know, whereas in Manchester, because New Order and [T]he Stone Roses and Happy Mondays were identifiably still in Manchester, even though [T]he Stone Roses were technically obviously on a London label, it was still as though, er, Manchester could renew.” (Cohen, 2007, p. 146).*

The above quote may not have placed much emphasis on the importance of London to musicians; however, Gu (2010) has found London events useful for Manchester-based fashion designers. Her study of Manchester fashion creatives speaks of a case where a Manchester group first met in London Fashion Week and as she says: “initiated acquaintance because of their northern identity and connected because of shared interests and personality” (Gu, 2010, p. 59), i.e., shared cognitive direction that was developed by mutual cultural heritage. She also mentions “[due to their shared cognitive direction] the relatively closed nature of the networks of Manchester fashion designers relates to their functioning as providers of social support and mutual aesthetics or cultural validation. A strong sense of ‘creative community’ gains its strength by not just being open to anybody” (Gu, 2010, p. 61).

When observing the relationship among culture, media attention and places in Manchester, some authors<sup>127</sup> have paid specific attention to ‘The Hacienda’, a converted yacht builder’s shop and warehouse found at the Deansgate/Castlefield area, which is to the south of the city centre. The Acid House/Rave music subgenre originated in Chicago and became popular all over Europe and North America (Finnegan, n/a; Finnegan, 1989); The Hacienda is one of the best-known venues of the Acid House/Rave during the 1980s (Haslam, 2000). Over time music tastes change and alternative rock was becoming popular again; the Acid House/Rave sensibilities had synergised with more guitar-driven music and mutated into what is known as the Baggy and Madchester scene, which ‘The Hacienda’ was also synonymous with. This venue was a place where people from two music genres met and synergised.

This section on Manchester is mainly about music; there are also non-creatives in Manchester, like those musicians and media professionals who work at the Granada Studios complex and the BBC’s *MediaCityUK* site. However, the Manchester music heritage has been well studied and documentation is easily available, as the Madchester scene and Baggy music are the only movements that originated in Manchester and spread to the rest of the world (T Wilson, 2002; Middles, 2006; Bottà, 2006). Brown, O’Connor & Cohen (2000) also commented that they identified the Madchester scene and Baggy music as having strong local music identity that did not mix with many other creatives

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<sup>127</sup> Such as T Wilson (2002); Brown, O’Connor, & Cohen (2000); Haslam (2000) and Cohen (2007).

from different genres or creative subgroups. Musicians and their blurred edges of the Madchester scene and Baggy music were “often closely networked groups of music-related businesses within the city” (Brown, O'Connor & Cohen, 2000, p. 441). Despite being globally influential, these Manchester musicians were effectively a local cultural tribe.

### **Brno as a cooperative, cross-discipline hub**

The Brno creative legacy and creative production system is different from that of Manchester. Similarly to the industrialisation period, we can notice Brno-based creatives working within the framework of a regional-wide network of hubs, as opposed to Manchester's situation as a stand-alone creative city.

The cultural and creative industry notably peaked in Brno in the 1920s with the Devětsil<sup>128</sup> group and the 1960s with the Czechoslovak New Wave. As in Manchester, the former art movement had some influence on the latter (Hames, 1985). Unlike the Manchester case, these creative groups could be identified as being more interdisciplinary rather than belonging to one sector or genre. Moreover, these groups were identified as Czechoslovak movements because they were located in many cities over Czechoslovakia. According to Winner (2009), the Prague kavárna (café) was a central place where creatives from all over the Czech lands congregated (Hames, 1985; Vlček, 1990; Winner, 2009); there was also a branch in Brno.<sup>129</sup> It was common for members of Prague and Brno branches of Devětsil and Czechoslovak New Wave to go to each other city's meetings.

Both the Devětsil and Czechoslovak New Wave movements had a cross-disciplinary makeup; therefore, their creative outputs used various modes of production but could be distinguished by their works being based on one idea and style (Volek, 1980). The cross-discipline nature meant that many creatives had attempted producing creative goods or services that were associated with many creative subgroups. For example, Jiří Kolář tended not to be isolated and categorised as only a poet, writer, painter or translator.

In addition to the problem of locating Brno's creative history, it is important to note that there are practically no publications in the English (and to a lesser extent in Czech) language specifically on Brno's influence in any creative movements, which suggest that there is very little acknowledgement of Brno as a major contributor to any Czech cultural and creative industry. Yet, there are some well-known Brno creatives such as the world-famous writer Milan Kundera. However, similar to Cohen's discussion with the Manchester DJ about

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<sup>128</sup> The core members of the avant-garde modernism group were consisted of actors, architects, artists, composers, directors, musicians, poets, photographers, theorists, and writers (Winner, 2009).

<sup>129</sup> The names of the kavárnas were never stated in any of the literature that I had read.

Liverpool (Cohen, 2007, p. 146), well-known creatives such as Kundera are often associated with the Czech Republic or the nation as a whole or even with France (where he was an exile), as a result of which they lose their city identity.<sup>130</sup>

It appears that those involved in the Brno cultural and creative industries and cultural entrepreneurship are not affiliated, or fixed, to any exact locality. This could be an obstacle for any vision for Brno developing as a creative-orientated entrepreneurial city. This is not an issue for Greater Manchester.

### **Locating local cultural areas**

This chapter will finish with a section on the topic of space and spatial distribution and overview potential places of creative activities. It could be presumed that the methodological use of participant observation through snowball sampling means that I should do the fieldwork without developing any prior ideas concerning my research. Otherwise, my movement would gravitate to certain well-known 'creative areas' and miss out on under-researched places. However, this is impossible. First, because of having family in Greater Manchester and having extensive knowledge of the British music scenes, I was pushed in a certain direction, meaning that I already hold a certain bias towards studying Manchester and its music scene. However, there are other considerations; it would allow me more time to unearth under-researched areas. Finally, being able to talk about places, like 'The Haçienda', would give me more to discuss with informants and subsequently allows me to gain trust with them. Moreover, knowing previously researched places would allow me to align this thesis with similar studies.

The volume of published research on the Manchester cultural and creative industry outweighs those made in Brno,<sup>131</sup> meaning it is easier to locate Manchester's widely understood 'creative areas'. There are hardly any places in Brno named as important creative areas. The only distinctive area in Brno is called Kamenná kolonie (number 8 on figure 7), which is isolated (by steep relief and lack of tarmac roads) from the city centre. A comparable place to Brno's 'artistic enclaves' is Chorlton (located in the Manchester suburbs). Both have little academic coverage, and I discovered them during my scoping studies.

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<sup>130</sup> More recent cases that I was told about during my Brno scoping studies were the 'European gaming' and 'European adult' industries.

<sup>131</sup> This was what I was told in 2007 by Czech and Slovak academics that were also interested in the cultural and creative industry; I met them at a Bratislava conference.

Most research<sup>132</sup> on Manchester's cultural and creative industries tends to direct the reader towards the Northern Quarter<sup>133</sup> (number 4 on figure 8) and the Deangate/Castlefield area (number 10 on figure 8). However, both have gone through 'waves of gentrification' caused by 'live/work developments' that I understand are not normally occupied by creatives<sup>134</sup> (O'Connor J, 1998; Cameron & Coaffee, 2005; Champion, 2010; O'Connor & Gu, 2010). It is now questionable whether they can still be seen as active creative milieus because both have been heavily gentrified.

Champion (2010) added that the inner ring around the central core of the city, such as Cheetham Hill, Whalley Range and Moss Side, could be characterised as places with few creative activities, limited especially to media and design-orientated activities. This suggests that there are cultural voids in inner Manchester. She suggests it is because of the inner-city deprivation making these areas too 'risky' for creatives to settle in.

Instead, Champion (2010) has suggested that there are other potential areas of research close to Manchester's main shopping area (number 1 on figure 8). She points to the disused former industrial areas at the 'outer city centre' such as Ancoats (number 2 on figure 8). Salford city centre (number 8 on figure 8) and possible warehouses in parts of Altrincham, Stockport and New East Manchester are favourable places for creatives to rent space because they are cheap spaces that are relatively close to Manchester city centre and situated where there are good roads for delivering and unloading goods. She called these places 'outer city centre' areas.

The 'outer city centre' is where you will find offices for design companies and 'managed workspaces'. The latter are normally warehouses converted to studio and office complexes; Brown, O'Connor & Cohen (2000) said that there were no restrictions on the type of businesses in the managed workspaces, which achieved an eclectic and ultimately effective mix environment. As well as managed workspaces, Cohen (2007) suggested that these empty warehouses and factories were also appropriated for other uses such as nightclubs, bars, record shops and cafés (Cohen, 2007, p. 112).

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<sup>132</sup> Such as Montgomery (2003); O'Connor & Gu (2010), etc.

<sup>133</sup> See Champion (2010) for an excellent summary of the relationship between the Northern Quarter and other parts of Manchester as a creative area.

<sup>134</sup> For example, one of my cousins, who owns a (non-creative) small / medium-sized enterprise, lived close to both the Northern Quarter and Castlefield during my fieldwork and scoping study.

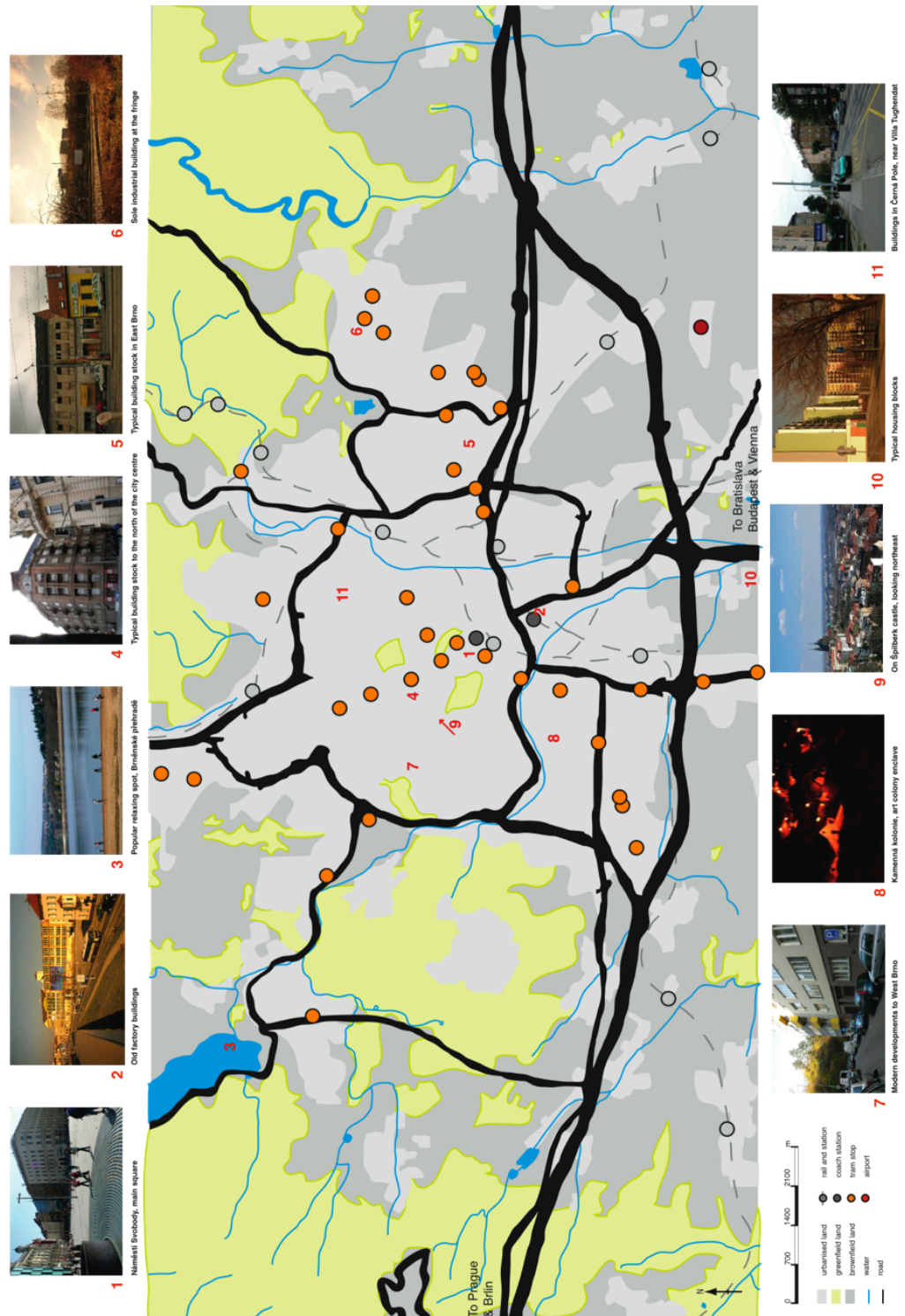


Figure 7: The schematic map illustrating Brno's urban fabric and transport stops. It appears that number 6, Kamenná kolonie, is the only known local creative area in Brno. Places of interests in Brno possibly with creative and cultural activities: (1) Náměstí Svobody, main square; (2) Old factory buildings; (3) popular relaxing spot, Brněnské přehradě; (4) typical building stock to the north of the city centre; (5) typical building stock in East Brno; (6) sole industrial building at the fringe; (7) Modern developments to west Brno; (8) Kamenná kolonie, art colony enclave; (9) on Špilberk castle, look northeast; (10) typical housing blocks; (11) Buildings in Černá Pole, near villa Tugendhat. Map created by Aaron Mo 2009.

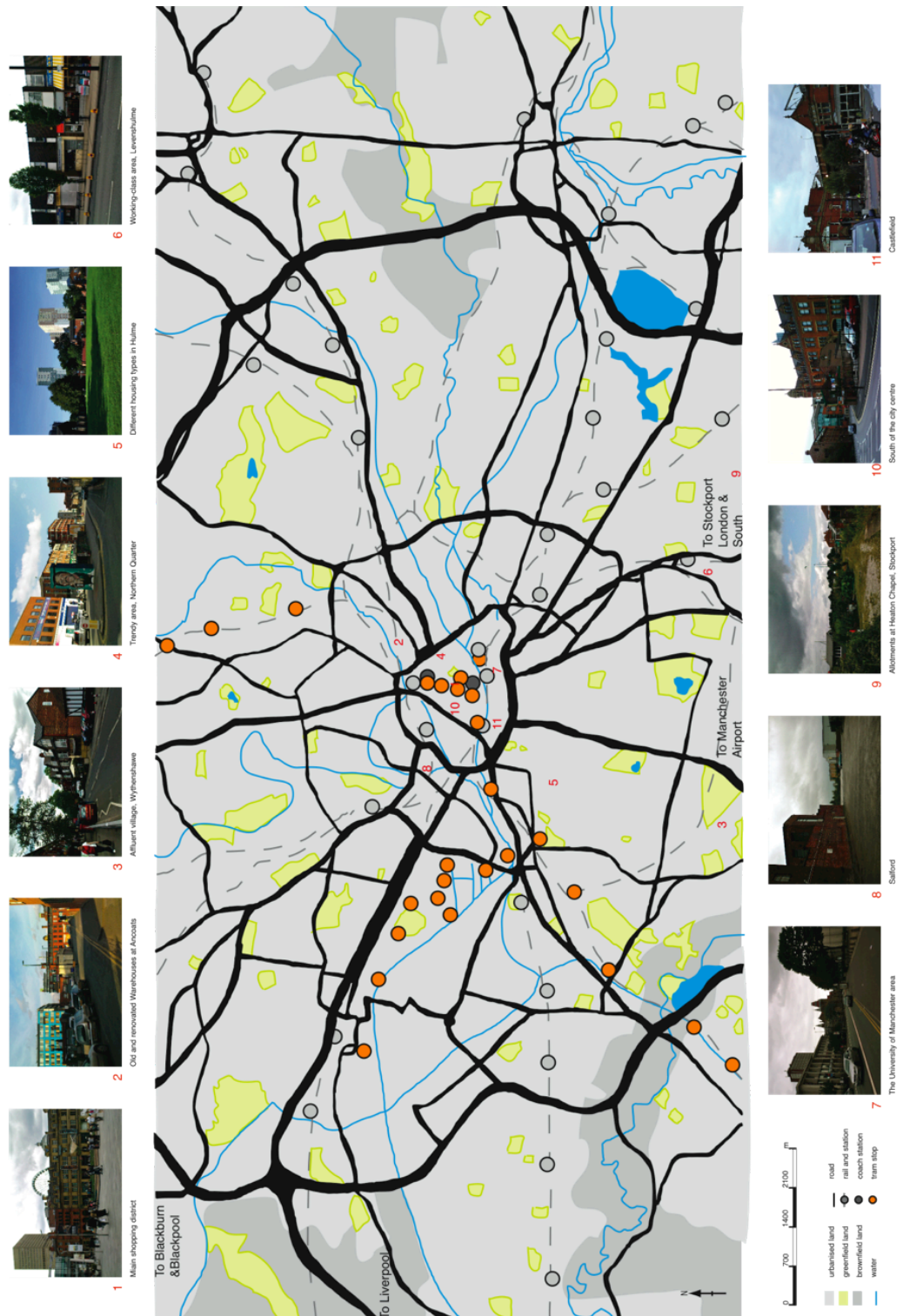


Figure 8: The schematic map illustrating Manchester's urban fabric and transport stops. These places are also potential places of interest. Places of interests in Manchester possibly with creative and cultural activities: (1) main shopping district; (2) old and renovated warehouses at Ancoats; (3) affluent village, Wythnshawe; (4) trendy area. Northern Quarter; (5) different housing types in Hulme; (6) working class area, Leverhulme; (7) the Manchester University area; (8) Salford; (9) allotments at Heaton Chapel, Stockport; (10) south of city centre; (11) Castlefield. Map created by Aaron Mo 2009.



Garb & Jackson (2006) commented that large proportions of the Brno outer city centre and inner ring around the central core of the city are contaminated brownfield land or large housing estates in poor condition occupied by the poorer citizens of Brno, especially the Roma population. Sýkora (2006) added that commercialisation of the centre and suburbanisation means that there is virtually no interest in redevelopment.

Unlike Brno, redevelopment was very important in Manchester's local government in the period 1960s — 1980s (O'Connor J., 1998). However, Brown, O'Connor & Cohen (2000) suggested that the new appropriation of brownfield land was unplanned, as Manchester City Council tended to adopt a 'hands off' approach to the cultural and creative industry. However, Young, Diep & Drabble (2006) observed that whenever the local government did attempt to use local culture it had been to commodify the local music scene images in Manchester's branding campaigns. This act is essentially one of the tactics employed by the local government in regenerating the area extensively (Champion, 2010). The most recent example is the Manchester International Festival ([mif.co.uk](http://mif.co.uk)).

Because Manchester's industrialisation was so early (18th and 19th centuries), its urban fabric and housing stock needed renewal throughout the 20th century; therefore, the City councils responded with slum-clearance and renewal programmes. Interventionist public policy was still dominant when Manchester was hit by deindustrialisation in the later 20th century, which led to extensive urban "regeneration"; initially state-led but from the 1980s onwards more market-led and entrepreneurial. This history is very different from Brno where deindustrialisation in the 1990s coincided with (and was partly a result of) neoliberal policy with very little planned public intervention as a consequence.

Using past research, this section has identified some areas that are considered 'creative' and others that are not. However, it is not certain that all creative activities have been found in these places, especially the 'supporting activities'. It is necessary to observe the activities found in areas of clustered creative activities, how they assist cultural entrepreneurship, and rationalise their location patterns.

This literature review has emphasised the importance of networking in the cultural and creative industries. It is not enough to identify the places for networking. When observing the spatial aspect of networking places, Humphrey (2005) identified a kitchen table and shared areas in student halls of residents, rather than a house or halls of residents. With regard to the temporal aspect of networking places in the cultural and creative industries, Gu's (2010) paper suggested the importance of events, such as clubs and art previews. She pointed out that club night 'The Loop' is the most famous networking event in Manchester. It must be noted that events occur at set times. McRobbie (2010)



also pointed out the networking in events is limited to certain people. She used the example of clubs, where young, nocturnal people and those with similar music taste mainly use them. Just as Putnam's (2000) comment on the Xerox queue during office hours being important networking spaces<sup>135</sup>, it is important to observe the internal spaces and the time of the day when an activity occurs.

This final chapter of the literature review has been designed to broaden into various branches of knowledge including economic and political geographies, social science, media and communications, transport, as well as local government and public development of Manchester and Brno and their historical and industrial past in relation to cultural and creative industries.

In the literature review we have discussed that creatives are made up of different collectivities of artistic producers, who rely on activities by non-creatives (the blurred edges). Each creative has their own unique set of work activities, cultural habits, cognitive direction<sup>136</sup> and 'zones of influences'; moreover, their home city's positioning within the cultural and creative industries hierarchy influences them. Sometime these differences are shared amongst groups of people, which form cultural 'tribes', or scenes. These groups have different creative production and creative market workplaces; none of them is bounded to a city. The global creative ecosystem means that creative networks are geographically spread. However, it has been highlighted that face-to-face encounters is a very useful tool in creating and strengthening social ties. What have not been investigated in detail are the spaces, places and time that face-to-face encounters occur. This knowledge is essential in the cultural and creative industries. All of this provides the context and framing for the ethnography.

This ethnography will begin by reporting on the creatives in this study, and how they relate to the key non-creatives identified during the Manchester and Brno fieldworks. The following three chapters of the ethnography will be an account of creative production, the creative market environments, and how they apparent in workplaces. The common places and activities that enable networking will be highlighted. The final two chapters of the ethnography describe the nuances in the spaces, places and time that face-to-face encounters often happen.

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<sup>135</sup> For more information, see also chapter four in the context of face-to-face encounters.

<sup>136</sup> The sets of ideas and ways of doing things that dominate a person's decision-making.

## Part 3: The Ethnography

### Chapter 6: The creatives – a category with blurred edges

#### Creatives

I met many people during both my fieldwork periods in Manchester (UK) and Brno (the Czech Republic), some of them were creatives and others not. The ethnography will begin by giving an overview of the creatives that I knew who were residing in Manchester and Brno.

Yet, as we have seen in chapter one, the non-creatives are somehow part of creative scenes, such as Manchester's 'Salford-City Centre West' and Brno's New Media Art (NMA). Those associated with these scenes are acknowledged in this ethnographic discussion as those who had strong ties to at least one creative actor or workplace (see chapter nine) encountered during the fieldwork periods. This shows that the category is not clear-cut and, therefore, has 'blurred edges'. In this empirical study, the category of people who are called 'creatives' may include some blurred edges; the ethnography will focus on those people identified as technicians, cultural gatekeepers, workplace managers and socialites. The expression 'blurred edges' can be used to indicate a particular phenomenon that is not clearly demarcated. This section will provide an idea of the different types of people that occupy the 'blurred edges' and discuss how they may relate to creatives' networking and production activities.

#### A reflection of the creatives found during the fieldworks

In addition to the informants I found during my scoping studies, I established new contacts when hanging around in places in Brno or Manchester, considered 'creative areas' by the locals. Over the course of the fieldwork, I discovered that these places were not limited to those mentioned in chapter five in this thesis. Undocumented places like a road in a Greater Manchester suburb were found through the snowball sampling technique: informants used their local knowledge to inform me about places they thought I might be interested in. Sometimes they gave me the contact details of people connected to these places. In most cases I met these new informants and, again, they told me of other places and contacts, and so on.

Sometimes I attempted to visit new places without relying on snowball sampling, as the creatives started to connect me with the same people. I found new people by looking for creative places where I had not visited before; I looked for them on the Internet, in cultural guides (such as 'Kult') or by walking aimlessly around the city. Five months into my Brno fieldwork, I felt that I had seen all creatives and had found all creative workplaces in the city.

I did not have the same sense of a 'dead-end' when using the same techniques in Manchester. In fact, I found that the snowball sampling methods related to the 'Salford-City Centre West' (SCCW) scene kept introducing me to new people; so much so that I rarely had time to find all new locations and creatives' networks. I was aware that the method of 'following'<sup>137</sup> might cover too much ground and produce 'thin' descriptions of several places in the ethnography, but I did record observations of all the people that I met, focusing my participant observation on people that others were frequently referring to.

Twice during the Manchester fieldwork, I decided to look for new workplaces. Just as in Brno, I found them through the Internet and other cultural guides. I decided to look for other workplaces not mentioned by members of SCCW because I was concerned that I was limiting myself to just one 'cultural tribe'. I found one group organised around fashion, and another around photography. With a few exceptions, the 'tribes' were not found at the same workplace.

On reflection, my fieldwork research showed a bias to the fine and plastic art subgroups in Manchester. This is because most people from the SCCW were from this subgroup. I am also aware that using the snowball sampling research methodology means that one is likely to miss particular sets of information. In my research this is especially the case with regard to the literature subgroup. I did know that this group existed in Manchester but I failed to arrange meetings with them.<sup>138</sup> In Brno, I had attended poetry readings but, ironically, we failed to communicate because of language issues.<sup>139</sup> As I had predicted, my own interests and my ability with the Czech language imposed restrictions on the gathering of potential research material.<sup>140</sup> I could have possibly spoken with more Brno creatives, but from what I have seen there were in any case fewer creatives in Brno than in Manchester.

### **Creatives' profile**

Gender and class seemed to be generally irrelevant when talking about creatives in Manchester and Brno. The only obvious gender aspect in all observed subgroups of creatives was that most Manchester ceramists and Brno fashion designers were female.

It was difficult to identify the class background of creatives. First because the Manchester creatives who I asked never gave a direct response,<sup>141</sup> or there

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<sup>137</sup> See methodology.

<sup>138</sup> The informant told me that they were a closed group that was 'suspicious' of someone researching 'on' them rather than 'with' them.

<sup>139</sup> My Czech was still not good and many Czechs preferred not to speak in English.

<sup>140</sup> Even my research assistants had limited knowledge of the required literature.

<sup>141</sup> The only exception being a ceramist who prides herself on her working class background.

was no answer at all. The most important consideration in the case of Brno is that the communist system resulted in a social hierarchy very different from the class system in Britain. As a result, it was not possible to make any accurate class background assessments, let alone make comparisons between the two cities. However, judging by the consumption patterns and how some creatives talk down to some of their peers, it was clear that some creatives do not see themselves as part of one social group.

I would guess that the average age in both case study cities were between 18 and 30 years. There were a small number of them older than 50 years old in both cities; many of them were lecturers in arts and technical schools and/or practising creatives. Some of the group of older creatives had lived in either Manchester or Brno, and then spent some time in another city before returning. This would to some extent back up Markusen & Gadwa's (2010) claim that practising creatives have a tendency to move to a second order city when they get older. I was told the absence of people of the middle age range was generally due to out-migration.

Unlike the previous categories, there was an observable discrepancy in terms of ethnicity between Manchester and Brno. Many of the creatives that I observed originated from the regional catchment areas of Manchester and Brno, and most of them came from smaller settlements around these two cities. Having in mind the different histories of the British Commonwealth and the monocultural Communist regime, it is clear that local Mancunian creatives were more racially diverse than their counterparts in Brno.<sup>142</sup> Most foreigners in Brno were from Slovakia. The foreigners that I met in Manchester came from all over the world, including the Czech Republic. Thus, Manchester had a cosmopolitan mix, with many Chinese,<sup>143</sup> while the Brno cultural and creative industry was mainly made up of Czechs and Slovaks.

### **Migrating to Manchester and Brno**

One graphic designer from a Czech village suggested that he moved to Brno because it is "more connected to the world". This may back up Burke's (2000) observation about cities' historical "function as cross-roads and meeting-places" (p. 54), but the obvious question that I asked him was: why did he not move to Prague? He replied that the city offers a "more peaceful environment". It seems that most of the creatives from smaller human settlements prefer to work in "slower paced" and "laid-back" cities. Manchester and Brno are less of a challenge in their ways of life than London and Prague. It was even common for me to hear many Brnoites describing the city (positively) as a 'city with a village

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<sup>142</sup> There is a large Vietnamese and Roma population, but I did not meet any working as creatives.

<sup>143</sup> This is because of the Chinese Art Centre.

mentality'. Another typical response is that they dislike Prague; normally because of the faster pace of the city, having more distractions, the more expensive cost of living, the large number of tourists or simply it is the capital city. I have also heard this response from Manchester creatives with regard to London.

So why move to Manchester and Brno specifically? As we discussed in the literature review, many academics have found numerous reasons for creatives moving to a particular city, most of which are personal factors. This is true for the creatives I met. The most common shared features in the case of Manchester and Brno are the following:

- Many creatives were born in either Manchester or Brno, i.e., many of the local creatives are not migrants.
- Friends and family – those who originated from the Manchester or Brno region or smaller urban settlements moved to the large city because of friends and family – for example, a fine artist who originated from Northwich, a town in North West England, had art school education in Leeds, and then spent time in Australia and Canada, after which he moved to Manchester because most of his childhood-friends and family were living there.
- Education standard – both cities have well respected universities. Brno has Masaryk University (ranked second best in the Czech Republic – [webometrics.info](http://webometrics.info), 2010) and the Technical University of Brno (ranked fifth – [webometrics.info](http://webometrics.info), 2010) while Manchester has the University of Manchester (ranked 29th best arts and humanities university world-wide – THE, 2010), Manchester Metropolitan University, and Salford University (both highly ranked for Arts and Design in the UK – [thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk](http://thecompleteuniversityguide.co.uk), 2009) as well as several art colleges. Masaryk University and the University of Manchester have well regarded language departments. The other higher education institutions are well respected in their creative subgroup field at graduate and postgraduate levels. However, having Arts education was irrelevant for some of my informants, as they were educated in other disciplines. For example, a musician from Telč, a town in South Moravia, moved to Brno to study forestry, and a graphic designer studied religious studies.
- Good transport connections – this made travelling to established creative cities simpler and more cost effective than other cities of a similar size, such as Leeds and Ostrava.
- Cheaper housing – I noticed that this was especially important for older creatives with families. A Brno-based fine artist recently moved from Prague because he was unhappy about working and earning just enough to fund his living costs in Prague. He said that in Brno, he could afford a larger place to live and work, without compromising 'thinking' activities

(see chapter seven). Moreover, because of the good transportation service to Prague, it was common for him to have a day or overnight trip to Prague, to maintain his network.

- Job opportunities unrelated to the cultural and creative industry – for example, a Manchester-based Czech photographer was first attracted to Manchester because of an employment opportunity, as a nanny. She then saw a potential of living in England as a photographer. Once she became proficient in the English language, she attended an arts school in Stockport, Greater Manchester. She has since found work as a freelance photographer, through acquaintances built up by attending creatives' events, in Europe.
- Job opportunities related to the cultural and creative industry - for example, a Slovak fashion designer was attracted to Brno, rather than Bratislava, because of the demand for costume designers in theatres and an opportunity to open a fashion shop in a large city. There is a larger international pool of creative-orientated students, from a wider range of countries, in Manchester than Brno because they are drawn by the perception of achieving more and having better opportunities as a creative in Britain, not by the microeconomics of the city.

As the last point suggested, there are reasons that Manchester has a stronger pull for foreign creatives than Brno. The following observations are some of the explanations to this phenomenon:

- English is the most widely used language in the world. However, Czechs are not renowned English speakers, which could be disconcerting to many non-Slavic speaking foreigners.
- The relatively cosmopolitan city of Manchester is attractive to foreign creatives, knowing that they can always find a fellow countryman if necessary – for example, a Czech photographer was attracted to Manchester because she knew of the Czech community that she could rely on if she could not settle in the city.
- Manchester has a musical heritage, which some creatives I met equated to a developed cultural and creative industry.<sup>144</sup> A well-known musician in Manchester, who originated from Birmingham, studied English at Manchester University in the late 1980s – early 1990s because at that time there was a strong dance music scene, which attracted him to 'DJing'. He now works as a DJ and journalist. Many Manchester-based creatives mention their love of Manchester music and the pubs and clubs that play it.
- Being in contact with the seemingly strong British cultural and creative industry – for example, a Greek fine artist was attracted to Manchester

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<sup>144</sup> We will soon see this is believed to be incorrect.

because of the prospect of entering the British art market, which she believed was stronger than the Greek one.

To illustrate the cultural importance for a creative new to a city, I point to the cases of a German and a Dutch artist in Brno. The German was in his 50s, who had Czech roots<sup>145</sup> and had lived in Brno for over a decade. He was fully integrated into the city because of his roots and because many Czechs of his age spoke German. The Dutch artist who was in his late 20s did not speak Czech and had moved to Brno three weeks before I had spoken to him. The Dutchman relocated because his girlfriend was working in the city; he followed her. At the time, he only spoke Dutch and English. He did not find many creatives to bond with because not all Brnoites spoke, or were comfortable with speaking, English.<sup>146</sup> Therefore, he was delighted when he saw me (who doesn't look Slavic) writing, taking photographs and sketching in a 'black book'<sup>147</sup> in a pub. He assumed I was a foreign creative. Disappointed that I was not a creative, he spoke of the difficulty of being a non-Czech speaker meeting other artists of a similar age. He had also spoken about moving back to the Netherlands. I will speak more about Czech social habits for trust and bonding later in the ethnography, but the most important point for now is that Brno is, unintentionally, an uninviting city for foreigners to settle in simply because of language barriers and cultural habits.

### **Where they lived**

The location of the creatives' dwellings depends on personal preference and priorities. Many of my informants mentioned costs and benefits for their choice of dwelling; others mentioned the proximity and ease of commuting between other workplaces (including those regions outside their respective city). For yet others, factors like the geographical proximity to their friends, or their personal desires were important (e.g., types of architecture or the need for a grassy area).

My informants in both Manchester and Brno generally lived across their city. Just as Markusen & Gadwa's (2010 p.387) suggested, creatives are spread across a city, meaning that there was no one area where creatives chose to concentrate: some lived in more run-down parts of the city, others in expensive areas. However, in the case of Brno it was noticeable that creatives tried to avoid residing in the Roma areas. I never met any creatives in the Roma areas and many questioned me why I decided to live in a Roma neighbourhood.

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<sup>145</sup> He died shortly after I finished my fieldwork.

<sup>146</sup> Almost all the Brno creatives that I have spoken to in English commented about their 'bad English'.

<sup>147</sup> The compilation of idea, normally in a jotting pad, is commonly recognised as a 'black book' by many of my informant.

The process of post-socialist restitution of property also influenced the available locations of creatives' residences in Brno. An example is a graphic designer from Brno who, because he was given his grandmother's flat, lives near UNESCO World Heritage Site Villa Tugendhat, an affluent part of the city, which was far from his contemporaries who were not originally from Brno.

Restitution influencing where someone lives is not much different from inheritance. The reason why there is a more obvious impact in Brno is because few Manchester creatives are from Manchester, thus inheritance is not common. There is greater concentration of creatives in particular areas of Manchester because of rent and price variations.

The spread of creatives was mainly due to homeownership.<sup>148</sup> Most of the Manchester creatives who I spoke to changed location several times, especially if they did not originate from the city. For example, as a university student, a Manchester-based musician moved to squats in Wally Range and Hulme in the 1980s and early 1990s. When he started a family and decided to stay in Manchester, he moved with his family to the leafier Withington. He later moved to the more lively area of Didsbury because of his need to be connected to contemporary musical tastes.

With regard to home ownership, I did not notice any clustering of creative subgroups, in terms of ethnic background, age, gender or class. However, there were small pockets of young creatives in both cities; this was mainly because they were renting property. It seems that those renting property attempt to live close to their closest network. Some creatives from Manchester told me that they first moved to known creative districts like the Northern Quarter and Chorlton.<sup>149</sup> Most of them rationalised the move to these areas because they hoped of meeting new people quickly and forming a local network. After a year or two, their knowledge of Manchester geography developed and multiple networks formed from events and workplaces. Many of these residents move away from these original settlement areas for various reasons.

This ethnography shows an unclear geographical pattern of creatives' residential location in Manchester and Brno.

### **Moving on from Manchester and Brno**

So far in the ethnography discussion, we observed reasons that creatives are found in Manchester or Brno, and that they are located all over the city. It would be a wrong assumption to think they will all continue to live in the city all their life. I have observed that some of the informants left Manchester or Brno during,

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<sup>148</sup> I.e., the decision to buy property.

<sup>149</sup> There is no known 'creative area' in Brno.



or after the fieldwork.<sup>150</sup> This section reports on the limitations of a second order city that makes creatives leave the city for some period of time.

Manchester is England's third city, but is sometimes thought of as a second city, as it appears to have more evidence of creative legacy than England's official second city, Birmingham. When looking at music, Manchester and London have been rivalling brands of creative music production for a few decades. The height of this rivalry was arguably during mid-1990s, when Oasis (from Burnage, Manchester) and Blur (the band met at Goldsmith College, London) were bitter enemies, city pride developed, fighting for the title of being the centre of Britpop (the main music genre of the time). At that time, there were no strong challengers from Birmingham.

I have spoken of many Brno creatives who originated from small settlements and enjoyed the 'city with a village mentality'. Some have a negative regard for this mentality. For example, one Brno-based fashion designer and shop owner described it as a 'second city mentality'. She explained that the locals have conservative and conformist attitudes, normal for the Czech Republic's second city. Making similar comparisons for her home nation, Slovakia, she said that the residents of Prešov, Slovakia's third largest city are more competitive with Bratislava than those living in Košice (the second largest city in Slovakia). She believes that this conservative and conformist attitude is hindering any sort of creative advancement for Brno creatives. There is some truth to the third city's creative competitiveness: Czech Republic's third city, Ostrava, is emerging and becoming widely accepted by Czechs as an alternative creative city to Prague, especially for young photographers. They are drawn by the brutal environment, cheap living, and the possibility of developing an 'ulica Stodolní' (a drinking street, once entirely occupied by creatives). She, who is in her early-30s, was thinking of moving to Ostrava.

During my fieldwork, I saw a relatively low number of creatives in both cities in the age-range from about the mid-20s. Some may stop working as a creative, yet, many have been observed to have left Manchester or Brno in favour of cities with larger creative markets or perceived higher concentration of cultural gatekeepers.<sup>151</sup> Manchester and Brno are seen as ideal locations to develop his or her style before moving to more established creative cities. The former trend appears to be more common in Brno, where many tend to become technicians.<sup>152</sup> Regarding the latter, the frequently intended destinations of many Manchester creatives that I spoke to went to London,<sup>153</sup> Glasgow and New York. For Brno creatives, the cities often mentioned were Prague,

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<sup>150</sup> I learned through social network sites that some of my informants moved away.

<sup>151</sup> See *other categories of people: the Blurred edges of the creative classes* section.

<sup>152</sup> See *other categories of people: the Blurred edges of the creative classes* section.

<sup>153</sup> A Manchester-based Czech photographer moved to London because of the perception of getting more freelance work.

London,<sup>154</sup> Vienna and Berlin. Essentially, second order cities can be used as a stepping-stone for a creative's career.

Some creatives leave when they become successful in their line of work. I know a case of a successful creative having workplaces in Brno, Berlin and Monaco. The reason for Berlin is because of his friendship network, Monaco because of tax reasons and Brno because of his strong affiliation to the city.

I have noticed that the rate of the creatives' in- and out-migration appears to be higher in Manchester than in Brno. Several people told me that despite a desire to leave the city, Brnoites have a tendency to stay in Brno for a long time, or return often if they have moved away. This is backed up as I have noticed some Brno creatives working in places well-known for hiring creatives, like the creatives' favourite café, Spolek, where some of them are still working there many years later. On the other hand, in Manchester, the situation seemed to be different, between my first and later visits to Manchester workplaces with a history of employing creatives, such as the Cornerhouse. In summer 2006 and the end of the fieldwork in spring 2009 it appeared that there were new sets of workers in all the workplaces I visited. I went back again in 2012 and there was yet another entirely new set of workers. Yet, it looked like the new sets of people were chatting to each other as if they had known each other for a long time. This reminds me of Robert Putnam (2000, p. 204) commenting on the American society being very open to newcomers to a community because of the society's 'nomadic existence'. This tendency towards nomadic movement is similar for many Manchester creatives.

### **Designation of work and activities**

During informal conversations I asked creatives how they would identify their work, or designate their activities/jobs. What most have in common is that they emphasise their 'cognitive direction',<sup>155</sup> i.e., their ideas, ethos, expression, interests. In terms of their practice, I received a range of answers: some mention a job title ('I am an artist'); others mention how they make their income ('I make cups for X shop'); another may mention a range of things they do and then prioritise one ('I do X, Y and Z, but I would call myself a conceptual artist'); some mention a history of their transformation (I started doing X now I do Y); and others name a genre ('I am a New Media Artist'). The first two are more common in Manchester, while the latter two more likely to be said in Brno. Like 1920s Devětsil and 1960s Czechoslovak New Wave, there were many examples of Brno creatives who individually and collectively crossed between

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<sup>154</sup> I have seen recently posted pictures of Spolek on Facebook. I recognise most of the waiters and waitresses on the pictures.

<sup>155</sup> The sets of ideas and ways of doing things that dominate a person's decision-making.

subgroups, often forming inter-subgroup collaborations: thus adding to the complications of identifying the membership of subgroups in Brno. It appears that Brnonites are more focused on the creative production environment, rather than professionalised into one creative market, as is the case for Mancunians. So identifying and classifying creatives themselves remains rather vague. This is why one of my Manchester informants spoke favourably of Richard Florida's (2002) the *Rise of the Creative Class* and with the confusion of the classifications on the DCMS (1998) Creative Industries: Mapping Document. He tells me that he does not apply for funding because his line of work does not fit into any categories that make him eligible for funding.

Moreover, when describing creatives in either city, it is important to be sensitive to the local peculiarities, such as the presiding main source of creative income and their city's dominant markets, and how people themselves define the situation in both places. One example is VJs (video DJs): at the time it was a recognised artform and creative profession in the Central and Eastern Europe zone of influences.<sup>156</sup> Therefore, I have heard informants calling themselves or other people working as VJs. There are fewer self-proclaimed VJ professionals in Manchester, as many do it as a hobby or as a way of getting a second income.

Creatives' identity is different between Manchester and Brno. This is partly due to differences in self-awareness of what they do, but also because of the demand for products differ in each country. There is more on this in chapter eight.

#### **Other categories of people: the blurred edges of the creative classes**

This thesis is mostly concerned with creatives' relationship with space and place. However, the literature review has stressed that creatives do not work alone and their practices rely on other people with specialised skills and roles. It is important to look at these people and describe their relationship with creatives.

The fieldworks identified and broadly grouped the following important cultural facilitators found in both Manchester and Brno: technicians, cultural gatekeepers, workplace managers and socialites. There are others such as customers, agents and auctioneers, but I was told that most of these latter categories are found outside their respective city.

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<sup>156</sup> See chapter three.

## Technicians

The roles of technicians include; provision of specialised advice, acting as a sounding-board for ideas and product readying for the creative market.



Figure 9: I had observed notice boards in several Brno and Manchester cafés and a way to look for new pools of resources. Some boards were used for general announcements and requests, while some use the notice boards for specific reasons. For example, the skill-exchange board at Nexus café in Manchester. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.

Each subgroup and mode of production requires different technical skills. These particular skills are also useful to others when creatives attempt to crossover to other subgroup disciplines. For example, the ‘fine art subgroup’ normally ask for advice when learning about a different medium; the ‘plastic art subgroup’ needs help with moving objects; the ‘fashion subgroup’, such as designers, normally have assistance with making clothes; those in the ‘performance subgroup’ need people designing clothes;<sup>157</sup> those in the ‘literature subgroup’ need to converse with others when developing ideas. Swapping specialised advice often requires

<sup>157</sup> Just like Hague & Hracs’ (2010) observation of indie musicians needing technical support from fashion stylists and photographers to support a certain image as musicians.

the creatives to establish networks with each other. However, some places offer skills exchange, see figure 9.

Sometimes technicians with specific skills are necessary for a product to work, such as a sound engineer, actor or session musician.<sup>158</sup> These technicians are used either to produce highly specialised technical elements of the product or to assist in showing the product to an audience. Often, they do not provide any creative input. I have noticed in the seven months of my fieldwork in Brno that many creatives (from any subgroup) offer technical help, especially for theatres. They may use their ‘talent’ but should not be regarded as creatives because they do not generate ideas but help implement someone’s concept. This is common in the art world. The plastic artist, Damien Hirst, is the artist who conceived, created and directed the art piece – he is a creative – but was notorious for hiring and relying on skilled technicians:

*“In an interview for Turps Banana (Issue 1, November 2004), Hirst speaks of his figurative painting as something accomplished by hired “technicians”. He puts in the black lines. His role is to organise – like a film director. By “technicians”, despite the demotion implied, he means artist hirelings with technique he doesn’t possess.” (Raine, 2012)*

Sometimes creatives need technicians for manual tasks, rather than for specific skills. Here the requirements for technicians are physical and mental ability to perform the task. One example was a sculpture comprising a dress and more than 2000 pins, see figure 10.

Many technicians in Brno and Manchester have been trained, worked or are currently working as creatives. Therefore, other than appearing to have a broader age range, their social-economic profile is similar to the creatives. The manual tasks do not require help of those with creative background. The people asked to help are normally anyone at close proximity to the location of the task, who is willing to help. During the fieldwork I have been approached for advice and as a manual labourer: people have asked me for advice regarding creative-related planning in Manchester, my take on British culture, and I have helped move equipment and artwork between rooms. In this sense, I was a technician. As far as I can see, technicians need not be creatives, unless it is with specialist advice like choosing the right paint. A technician needs to have the skill or ability to provide the manpower to help the creative. As far as I can see the creatives are not selective with choosing these people.

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<sup>158</sup> I personally, regard actors and session musicians as technicians because they do not conceive or create the work; they are people who add ‘flavour’ to the quality of the product.





Figure 10: Widow 2009. In May 2009 this 'garment sculpture' was constructed on the ground floor of the art studio complex, Islington Mill. The plastic artist had left the studio door opened and invited creatives and visitors of Islington Mill to help her. The garment sculpture took about three weeks to make, previewed at Islington Mill, before moving to Manchester Art Gallery. The work is credited to the artist who instigated the piece, not as a collective. The creatives that volunteered were counted as technical help. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009.

### Cultural gatekeepers

Just as Becker (1982) claimed, the role of cultural gatekeepers is effectively to rationalise 'cognitive direction': if they like the artwork, they will spread information about it to a mass audience. Many work as promoters, critics, journalists, presenters and DJs. They communicate through a wide range of media platforms, mainly advertisements, newspapers, websites, magazines, blogs and cultural guides. This is not an exhaustive list. Local cultural gatekeeper platforms have a regional remit, e.g., The Art Guide website concentrates on fine arts from North West England, while the Brno events guide, Kult, looks at Moravia and the largest events in Prague.

Many of the cultural gatekeepers I met in various cities, not just Manchester and Brno, were not creatives themselves, but were largely consumers and commentators of creative products. Their age profile in both Manchester and Brno varied depending on their interest. To make a generalisation from my empirical observations of two extreme cases: the New Media Art (NMA) cultural gatekeepers tend to be in their mid-30s, while those reporting on contemporary classical music are at least a decade older than their NMA counterparts. In

terms of gender and ethnicity, local cultural gatekeepers are often white males and females. Almost all those from Brno have lived outside the Czech Republic and are comfortable with speaking English.

Both Manchester and Brno creatives told me that there are cultural gatekeepers living in the city. However, they are of limited influence outside their respective region. Those with a national and even worldwide impact are assumed to be, according to my informants, based in a capital city or large city or cities that specialise in a specific field. For example, I was told that cultural gatekeepers in Bratislava are more important for NMA than those in Prague.

Very few cultural gatekeepers with a large impact on society visit either Manchester or Brno. An exception is film and cinema reporters from Prague who make frequent trips to Brno. Another is that alternative music reporters visit Manchester. In the case of Manchester, it could be explained that it is still a centre for the alternative music (e.g., Haslam, 2000). It is arguable that Manchester musicians benefit from reporters coming from London, and locally based TV and radio stations. However, influential music papers, like NME, no longer have a Manchester correspondent and the TV and radio stations spend very little airtime on Manchester culture. When I met a well respected, London-based art critic in his mid-50s, who visited Manchester for the first time, I asked him why was this the first time that he had visited Manchester? He replied by asking why he should take a two-hour trip to Manchester when his trip to Central London is only an hour, adding that it is normal for creatives to come to him. This is realistic; I have seen many creatives leaving Manchester or Brno with the aim of hoping to see one of these influential people in centres like London and Prague.

Many creatives have told me during the fieldwork that the few local cultural gatekeepers that exist in either city are largely unreachable because of communication difficulties and travelling obstacles, i.e., they are found in a tight network and rarely socialise outside their comfort zone. It appears that despite them being few in number; cultural gatekeepers are tightly networked to each other and rarely attempt to meet new local creatives. I was told in two separate occasions by a Brno record promoter and an owner of a record company in Manchester that they do not like meeting new musicians because they try to force them to listen to their music, not socialise with them. Also, as you can see from the London-based art critic, many of them expect creatives to approach them, via an agent they know and trust, and at specific times of the day (like office hours). Creatives' access to cultural gatekeepers is an obstacle, which can become problematic in entering the creative market as the consumers often rely on the recommendation, or at least acknowledgement, of such cultural gatekeepers.

### Workplace managers

Workplace managers are those who administer single or clusters of creative workplaces – mostly semi-private workplaces (see chapter nine). Their principal role is to allocate workspaces to creatives and facilitate a good working environment for them; organising logistic operations, cleaning, building maintenance and, to a large extent negotiate solutions and manage conflict.

The workplace managers in Brno that I met were all Czechs<sup>159</sup> with university background and had been or were currently creatives. Most of them were males. The age ranged from 20s upwards. The majority of Manchester workplace managers I met were British Caucasians<sup>160</sup> and aged from 30 upwards. Islington Mill in Salford, Spolek and Fléda in Brno are notable places where the owners have a hands-on management style. These owners are also identified as managers in this study.

These people normally operate with tight budgets and tend to perform additional roles, such as; curating, event organisation, promotion management, fundraising, additional maintenance, hosting and networking. If the workplace manager is sympathetic to creatives, approachable and easily reachable – I heard that this was not always the case – creatives use them as technicians; normally for feedback and manual labour.

This was the case for Islington Mill and Fléda where both workplace managers went as far as possible in providing large spaces for free, when people wanted to collaborate and experiment. During the fieldwork, Islington Mill turned its exhibition space over to AIR studios (for example, figure 10), while Fléda set up experimental music nights. What the managers had in common was their creative background, allowing them to share empathy with a creative's work pattern: Islington Mill is owned by a trained fashion designer interested in the DIY and Fléda is partly owned by Electronic musicians. The hands-on ownership by creatives creates self-interest in producing a reflexive identity and influences the genre and subgroups that are found in the workplace. For example, Islington Mill prefers to cater for artists over musicians, therefore, preferring not to rent space for bands which could disturb the other residents at

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<sup>159</sup> The exception being an American who lived in Brno for over 10 years because of his wife who originated from Brno.

<sup>160</sup> The noticeable exceptions were two Chinese workplace managers who appeared to be strongly linked with the 'Salford-City Centre West' (SCCW). I was told this was because of the Chinese Art Centre. The strong presence of Chinese managers is not reflective of the whole set of Manchester workplace managers.



Islington Mill.<sup>161</sup> The workplace managers of Islington Mill and Fléda were two of my gatekeepers and key informants during the fieldwork.

Workplace managers are also what Currid (2007) called cultural facilitators, gatekeepers, tastemakers and are assigned to report on specific genres, subgroups, 'high' or 'low' culture. Such workplace managers are usually relatively influential local cultural gatekeepers because they set the aesthetics of a workplace that people consume. Just as with the designation of creative's work and activities, there is a blurring of the categories of non-creative's roles.

Their recommendations are often highly regarded by creatives and consumers found at the workplace.

During the Manchester fieldwork, I met promoters at Islington Mill and The Hallé. Both are concert venues but for different types of music; I never saw them cross paths. This is also true of the separation of 'high' and 'low' culture venues in Brno, where New Media Art (NMA) is a dominant scene in the city, with an exhibition of it in Spring-Summer 2008 at the Moravian Art Gallery. I never saw anyone from Fléda (an important hub for the scene) in the invite-only preview. It appears that workplace managers form their own distinct networks, influenced by similar cognitive direction and aesthetic taste.

### **Socialites**

Referring back to the Dutch artist who moved to Brno with his girlfriend, something I had in common with him was that we were perceived as outsiders and that both of us wanted to feel comfortable within these new surroundings. Instinctively we thought this would be achieved by knowing people. Whenever I started going to places by myself looking for creatives, I normally looked lonely. After repeatedly going to several places, I started seeing the same faces and eventually someone came up and engaged conversation with me. Each conversation with these people seemed to be different and veered off to an obscure topic like a type of plant or someone's ideas of the world. He or she possessed a wide range of knowledge (about the world or the surrounding community) and was engaging to talk to. They are also very good at introducing people. Think of any friend's house party you have been to; the welcoming people are often referred to as a socialite (see the '*representing creative*' section in chapter four).

The socialites are not formally recognised as part of the cultural and creative industry. However, McRobbie (2011) did mention persons initiating the interaction as 'ice-breakers' for an event. I would say the socialites' role is not

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<sup>161</sup> Residents are what people at Islington Mill call those people who rent studio space there. They do not live in the studios.

only limited to making people feel comfortable in the surroundings of a specific place, but also to move around places and share information. They are a humanised node for information and have the ability to bring people to places they would not otherwise go to. Essentially, socialites are very important to uniting creatives (see chapter four). An extreme example is the London-based art critic who accepted an invitation to speak at Manchester's Islington Mill, after an engaging conversation with a socialite closely associated with the place at London's Southbank Centre.

The majority of my gatekeepers<sup>162</sup> and key informants were socialites.

There was no obvious preference for age, class, ethnicity or gender for either the Manchester or Brno socialites. However, I observed some commonalities: they had money and were willing to spend it on food and drink in pubs, cafés and restaurants (even if they did not have much disposable income they prioritised using money in this way). They were able to consume a lot of alcohol, they read a lot and most likely had a university education, possessed a large collection of contacts, and could speak English. A comment on the above observations is that as I also speak English; it is possible that there could be other networks in Manchester and Brno, based in the German language that were not accessible to me.

Socialites need not be creatives, but must have close emotional or associative ties to the particular intellectual or artistic 'orientation' of a workplace and the cultural and creative industry. Some of them, as I said, were even local cultural gatekeepers and workplace managers. For example, the socialite mentioned above is not practising as a creative but is closely related to people at Islington Mill; hence, the possibility arose to invite the art critic to Islington Mill.

By the end of both fieldwork periods, I could have been identified as a socialite myself. This was because the fieldwork was based on trust-building and knowledge accumulation through long-term participant observation, so I had to be sociable during the fieldwork, and became a familiar face in both cities and was willing to drink large amounts of alcohol. I was able to introduce people to each other during events and bring people to Islington Mill.

My experience as a socialite helped me understand how difficult it was to be sociable all the time. There were times when I only wanted to show my face and record data. At one point of my Manchester fieldwork I was entrusted with looking after a French bulldog<sup>163</sup> called Barbecue for two weeks because the owner went on holiday. He was a useful socialising tool (figure 11).

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<sup>162</sup> Gatekeepers for my own research, not cultural gatekeepers.

<sup>163</sup> This breed of dog typically breathes heavily and smells bad because they keep on 'passing wind'.

Managers and socialites have the potential to attract cultural gatekeepers from core cities. This can prevent the flow of creatives and cultural gatekeepers being unidirectional towards core cities. Judging from some conversations with Islington Mill residents, the presence of the London art critic at Islington Mill was beneficial because it provided the opportunity for Manchester creatives to speak to London cultural gatekeepers, and many learned to approach them.



Figure 11: I was looking after an informant's dog: Barbecue (bottom right of the picture), for two weeks in August 2009. At the time I was living at Islington Mill. Whenever I was recording data around Islington Mill, Barbecue was with me and always went to people whom I had never met before. I met one of these people in the picture again in 2012. After talking to me for half an hour, he remembered me as 'the person with the dog', not the person who spent some time living in Islington Mill. Video still by Aaron Mo, August 2009.

Socialites are important for providing identity and connecting creative hubs, like Islington Mill and Fléda. Yet, as I found out in Brno, different countries, generations, and subgroup genres have different language usage and jargons. Thus, I had difficulty with talking to Czechs belonging to the literature subgroup.

It is important that the socialites be recognised as a necessary group with a special role. Those identified as socialites had the commonalities of having a need to broaden their knowledge, having good communicative skills and abilities, and having good understanding of different scenes and cultures. This would lower communicative barriers and potentially widen hub networks, and in turn, increase learning opportunities and possibly further develop creatives' practice. The combination of socialites and empathic managers is important for the effectiveness of the people in the workspace. Like anyone, they will have

developed certain taste and cognitive direction. The people and activities a socialite brings together can have a direct impact on a creative's work.

This chapter has reported the distinctive roles played by the creatives themselves in the two case study cities and should have clarified the meaning of the concept of "blurred edges" – the penumbra of people who are not (or not only) creatives themselves but play one or more of these ancillary or catalyst roles of a technician, gatekeeper, workplace manager or socialite.

## Chapter 7: Creative production

Chapter three made a case that all creative practices involve a wide range of activities. The following two chapters explore these activities in more detail: firstly by investigating the different work activities that are involved in creative production, then by delving into the activities that support the first set of activities. There are times when this chapter looks at how activities relate to the workplace, as a place for work is integral to its activity. These workplace activities will be covered in more depth in chapter nine.

This chapter begins with explaining the complexity of three common phases of work activities when producing creative goods or services, which was identified during the fieldwork. These activities are grouped as living, working and showing activities (see figure 12). This part of the ethnography develops from what Peter Hall (1998) and Burke (2000) both identified as the asset of routine undertaken at different stages in time, space and places; however, the categorisation is my own invention.

There will be extensive discussion on what is known as the ‘showing’ phase. It is a phase found in workplaces that are opened to the general public. Here, we will see how showing creative products could aid creative production.

That play and leisure activities can affect the direction of a product is not a new discovery. What is more novel is that such activities are not restricted to ‘creative areas’ such as urban playscapes (Chatterton & Hollands, 2002). Here we will discuss, and to some extent digress, about how ostensibly counter-productive activities,<sup>164</sup> such as leisure pursuits and cultural habits<sup>165</sup> could affect a creative’s willingness to travel to other cities and how they form networks.

The chapter ends by summarising the importance of creatives’ mobility on creative production.

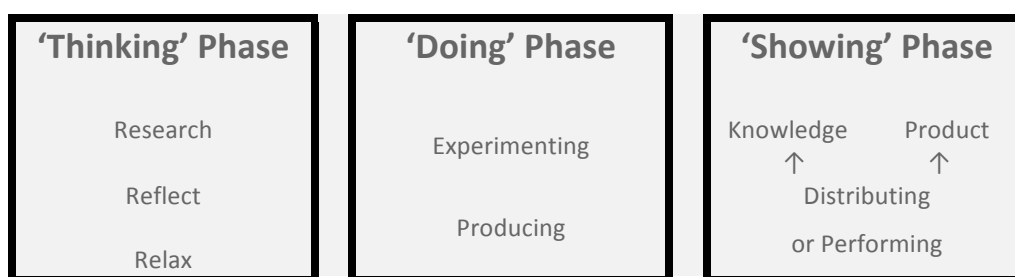


Figure 12: The different actions within each of these phases of the creative practice. Diagram by Aaron Mo.

<sup>164</sup> Such as getting drunk.

<sup>165</sup> Such as family holidays.

## Thinking

This phase is largely where individuals fathom out how to do the work effectively and efficiently, as well as accumulate knowledge and hoarded items. This involves research and data reflection using networks and information platforms.

Most of the supporting activities to perform these tasks may be done individually and at home. How people approach research, reflection and relaxation activities depends on the individual. Take the idea of reflection; for example, I know some informants who prefer to ask people for feedback and others who take many substances to give themselves a new viewpoint.

Research is essentially used for collecting ideas and understanding how to implement them. What subjects are chosen for research by creatives depends on their own interests. What is 'interesting' or 'unusual' to creatives seems to be heavily influenced by the environment they were brought up in and their personal exposure.

If I use myself as an example of potential research material for my informants, for those in Brno, the main interest would be that I was a Chinese-looking person who speaks English. While for those in Manchester the main interest would be my planning affiliations. In truth, most Manchester creatives found me neither interesting nor memorable. This attitude as shown by the Mancunians towards me is possibly because many of them have seen British Chinese in Manchester and they are used to academics researching them. At the time of the fieldwork there were two other academics making short interviews. The owner of Islington Mill once made a flippant comment that he had had enough of formal interviews because researchers (and local government)<sup>166</sup> ask questions hoping to hear a specific answer. Therefore, in Manchester I was not used as a resource; while I was seen by some of my informants as a cultural resource in Brno.

As well as the subject matter, the act of researching requires a methodology. Like academic disciplines, creative subgroups prefer to use one set of research methods to another. For instance, all of my plastic artists consider hoarding 'interesting objects' as a means of research and the fine art informants do research by taking pictures unusual to them. Yet, it seems that almost all the creatives that I spoke to record their research as doodles or write ideas in some form of jotting book.

Research can also be a collective activity. Many creatives use formal education and organised learning activities, such as reading groups. The majority of Brno creatives that I met are still associated with some form of higher education. In

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<sup>166</sup> During the fieldwork, Manchester City Council has a staff away day at Islington Mill.

Manchester many collective workplaces (see chapter nine) provide free talks that are well attended by creatives – they are mainly from the fine and plastic art subgroups. The Chinese Art Centre has a room called the Education Room, which is specially designated for group learning. Many academics like Peter Hall (1998) and Florida (2005) are correct in highlighting the importance of formal educational places but they are not the only places where creatives learn.

These forms of research as a group are often advertised to the public on posters or on the Internet. However, there are times when group researching activities are exclusive to those with strong ties. One encounter that I had was that I was not allowed to join a discussion group of literature-based creatives about the state of Manchester's cultural and creative industry, even though someone who was going to participate had invited me. There had been times when I participated in meetings with closely bonded groups; they were normally with people from Islington Mill. These meetings could last up to four hours; there had been many times when discussions had been unfocused and informal. These allowed for huge amounts of information to be exchanged. There was one occasion where a meeting was organised on one topic and ended up making a project on a completely different subject. Most long meetings changed locations and involved food and alcohol.

All the creatives that I met in Manchester and Brno gather with other creatives in order to discuss ideas and sometimes ask for help and technical support. This was more apparent in Manchester, than in Brno. As Cohen (2007) hinted when comparing Manchester and Liverpool music industries, there is a sense of Mancunian "community spirit" and cooperative environment. This provides a good environment to support collective research for all the creatives I met, even in different networks. I have seen times when people read something, remember that would be interesting to a colleague from a previous discussion, keep it and then present it to him or her at the next meeting. See figure 13 for an example.

The gathering of Brno creatives seems to happen in smaller and tightly bonded groups. I mentioned this observation to a Brno fine artist who criticised his compatriots as being like "lone wolves" and "two-faced". Adding that they all know each other; they just keep to their group until they need something specific. However, my experience from the fieldwork is that creatives will respond and offer short-term acquaintance if you persist in contacting them first and offer something they may take an interest in you (in this case it was normally me as a person). This, coupled with their tendency of dipping into other subgroups, allows collective research in the form of collaborative work as short-term projects without any long-term group aim. For example, a collaboration between a painter and graffiti artist was formed because of the

chance of being paid for a commissioned graffiti mural in the style of the painter.



Figure 13: A newspaper cutting given to his colleague, at the October 2009 Apocatopia exhibition preview in Manchester's Castlefield Gallery. The cutting was presented because of fine artist's interest in alcohol consumption. In the background, a group of creatives were discussing and sharing their opinions. Photograph by Aaron Mo, October 2009.

Research does not stop in the creatives' respective city and on the Internet; most of them go to other cities and countries for specific information. One Manchester ceramist spent a day at a friend's pottery factory shop to learn if she could mass-produce her new design. Some creatives move out of the city for long-term education. I knew several creatives who moved to London and Glasgow to obtain a Master's degree.

Once a product is well researched and a prototype or final product is designed and produced, it is important to reflect on it again. The creatives themselves can do this; self-reflection requires them to take time away from the prototype. Sometimes creatives shelve the project and revisit it in a later date, see figure 14 for an example.





Figure 14: A piece of work created in the mid-2000s. It was put in a box inside the fine artist's studio for several years. She had taken the work out of the box and placed the items on the shelf a couple of weeks before I visited her private studio at Islington Mill. She told me that placing the items on view for a couple of years after producing them helped her revisit and reflect on the initial idea. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.

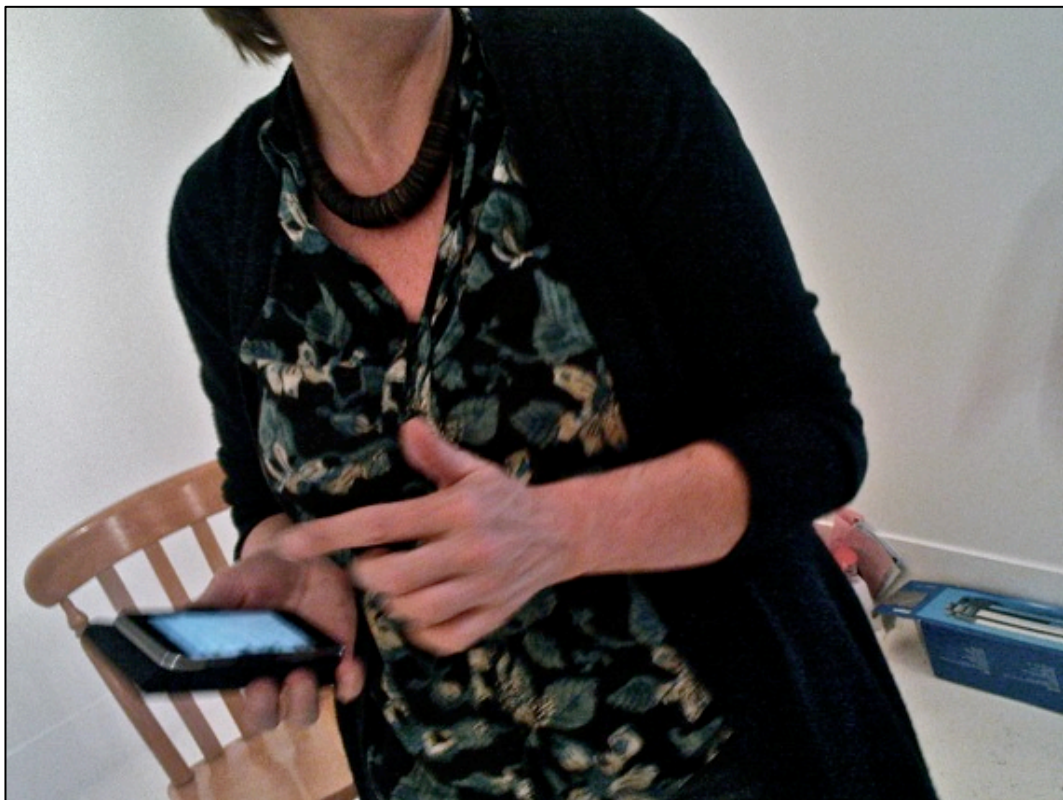


Figure 15: A Manchester sculptor took the opportunity of showing me her past exhibitions on her iPhone in July 2009. Sometimes she found new meaning or viewpoints to some of her past works whilst discussing them. Some of the new viewpoints were noted and she hoped they would influence her following projects. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.

Another way of reflecting on a product is to ask for feedback from other people. I have seen the majority of people show their work directly to a person or group of people. The work can be either in physical form (in that the product is in the same room as you) or shown virtually (see *'the impact of virtual technology'* section in chapter nine). An example of the latter could be seen with figure 15. This type of reflection requires the creative to value the other person's opinion; therefore, a high level of trust is often essential.

Surveying is another approach I saw. I experienced this three times whilst living at Islington Mill. The first time was when a product designer knocked on the residents' doors, presented two designs and asked the residents, which prototype they preferred and why. For the second time, the survey was carried out via the Islington Mill's internal group e-mail. He was a member of a group of creatives and sent a mail-out to the group, asking people to click the Facebook link. The final experience was during one of the infrequent Islington Mill residents' group meeting. A ceramist used the rare opportunity when a large group of residents gathered in a room and asked about a couple of ideas. Not all the people surveyed had strong ties to the surveyor. Being part of the Islington Mill community allowed creatives to ask many people for feedback on designs before spending money on manufacturing the products for the creative market. This was a way of saving money on potentially commercial designs, or as the creative wrote on his Facebook page: "[I] would like to know if anyone is interested in possibly buying one before I blow all my money on printing them?"<sup>167</sup>

The final approach for reflection is to use media exposure, *via* the cultural gatekeeper. I know of an internationally recognised music group who posted a sample of new music on YouTube and leaked it to one of their contacts at The Guardian. This drew the public to make comments on the YouTube page. Many of the creatives I met during the fieldwork that belonged to the performance subgroup use sites like YouTube, but very few were able to receive the same level of media exposure as the internationally recognised music group. This is because of the aforementioned difficulty of reaching cultural gatekeepers.

It appears that having different types of networks, with a mixture of strong and weak ties, is important for the 'thinking' phase of creative production.

## Doing

Research and reflection allows interests and concepts to develop into new ideas. These ideas need to be implemented and produced as a final product or prototype. This is the 'doing' phase. I have noticed that it was the only job with

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<sup>167</sup> Facebook link withheld due to ethical considerations.

fixed working hours. Some creatives speak about 'office hours'. I was once out socialising with creatives in Manchester and one plastic artist was nursing a bottle of beer and left early because he could not be hung-over due to his 'work on the sculpture tomorrow'. It was also noted when doing fieldwork in Manchester that Islington Mill was very quiet during the summer and weekends. This was because, unless a deadline had to be met, almost all creatives take the weekend off from their private workplace and they have annual holidays. This is particularly common for those with families.

It has been observed that having a routine creates momentum in producing work quickly. However, there were many times during the fieldwork where I have seen creatives who lost momentum and never completed the task they initially set out to do. The interventions could range from self-inflicted incidents, like letting 'supporting activities' take over, to external circumstances. One observed instance of the latter was the case of a group called Derive. Their project had been postponed because most of its members were going to events from the month-long Manchester International Festival. Once the festival finished, some members lost interest in participating and the remaining group had to revisit decisions made a month before. Some topics were forgotten.

Just as most people attach importance to keeping strict working times, places for producing the final product was also more or less inflexible. Moreover, specific subgroups tend to have similar workplaces. For example, most fine artists work in a studio and performance artists work on stage. Chapter nine will describe these places in more detail.

However, there are times when creatives appropriate atypical workplaces. There will be more on this in chapter nine. For the purpose of this chapter, the use of atypical workplaces is normally when people wish to experiment. Experimenting could be trying new techniques or forming new experimental collaborations. For example, a musician recorded under a motorway bridge because it provided the correct sound he wanted for the record. Sometime experiments can turn into final projects. This was found to be more normal for Brno creatives than their Manchester counterparts.

Making a product or experimenting with implementing new ideas can be done alone. Yet, as Becker (1982) suggested, this sort of activity cannot be achieved exclusively by himself or herself: there are many times when they require help from technicians.

### **Showing**

The final phase of creative production is the 'showing' phase, which takes place either in a public space or a private place temporally open to the public. If the creative is showing his or her work, the creative benefits from exposing the

product to an audience, getting a chance to meet new people and receive feedback (i.e., exposure to new pools of knowledge) and possibly leading to forming new networks.

The most common places for showing work in public space identified in both fieldworks are the public squares. Despite being privately-owned, Brno shopping centres were also used by the creatives during the 'showing' phase.<sup>168</sup> These places were gathering hubs with high footfall, which provide good conditions for showing a creative's output, such as a performance or exhibition, to a wider audience.

Almost every week of my Brno fieldwork, there were events at its main square, Náměstí Svobody, including exhibitions or performances celebrating Czech or Moravian culture.<sup>169</sup> For example, Slavnosti vína (the celebration of Moravian wine) and Zelený čtvrtek (a holy day but in reality a day to celebrate the annual Green Beer produced by the local brewery, Starobrno).<sup>170</sup> The majority of these events were promoted or funded by the local or national government offices. Any Brno creative involved with working in public spaces must also fit with the cultural promotion remit.

During the Christmas period, a stage was erected in Náměstí Svobody, which showed repeat performances of the same acts. By the second week the performance was all too predictable and I tried to avoid the main square at those times, as I did not like the songs she sang. The Czech version of 'It's raining men' was my biggest 'gripe'.<sup>171</sup> Despite the repetitiveness of the performances, the Náměstí Svobody was well attended (figure 16); many appeared to have stayed in the same spot for a long time.<sup>172</sup> I did find that if I hung around the main square I would bump into some of my informants also loitering; some I found out had the same intention. It seemed events, even if not of high quality, could be useful networking spaces.

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<sup>168</sup> This was also observed in other cities in Central Eastern Europe.

<sup>169</sup> Creatives are not the only people who use public spaces as a platform for 'showing' activities.

<sup>170</sup> There were other events at Brno Squares that were not based on alcohol. However, the two mentioned were by far the most popular. A local informed me that the popularity was so great that most of the people he knew (and their bosses) took two days off for the celebrations (one day for the drinking and another for the hangover). This agrees with Timothy Hall's (2003) anthropological study of Czech alcohol consumption as a cultural bonding tool.

<sup>171</sup> The Czech version means putting new words to a familiar tune and melody.

<sup>172</sup> I have recorded performances and then went to a meeting; after the meeting I saw the same people standing close to the same place before I went to the meeting.



Figure 16: Large audience facing the performers on an erected stage at Brno's Náměstí Svobody. This was during the afternoon of a weekend in December 2008. Most of them were buying Carp (the Christmas fish) and drinking mulled wine from the stall. Many people were looking around and then started to talk to people who they know. Photograph by Aaron Mo, December 2008.



Figure 17: The person was performing in the main shopping area of Manchester as a 'one man band'. He initiated without any formal offer. The picture was taken during the afternoon of a weekend in May 2009. Most of the people were watching because they were resting on the steps after shopping or were groups of teenagers hanging around. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009.

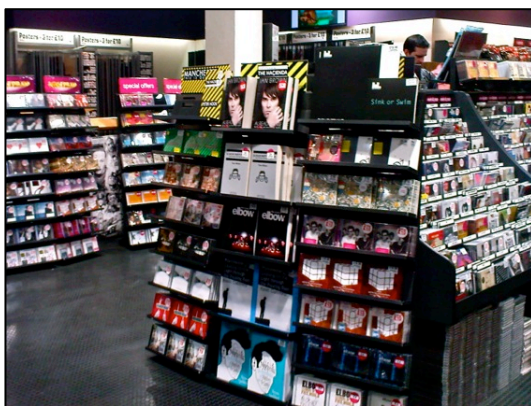


Figure 18: The Manchester section of the entertainment retail chain, HMV, in Manchester city centre selling CDs, books and posters. Entertainment retail shops in Brno did not have a section for Brno creatives. Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009.



I feel that public squares and to some extent shopping centres have a potential to be used as good networking opportunities, as well as a way for showing activities to reach a larger audience. However, it appeared that the public bodies use Manchester squares less than in Brno with most 'showing' activities at these public places being informal and independently set up (e.g., a show not always with huge audience appeal in Manchester as depicted in figure 17). The biggest audiences were for those who claimed to have been on TV talent shows.<sup>173</sup> It seemed that Manchester squares and shopping centres were rarely used for networking opportunities as observed in Brno because of the city and nation's apparent cultural tendency not to spend a long time in public spaces.

Shops are an important part of the creative market (see chapter eight), but also useful for creative production as they expose products to the public consciousness and promote the exchange of information. I have observed that there are more shops selling creative products in Manchester than in Brno. Most creative-orientated shops were located in the city centre and shopping centres. However, I have seen some shops of many subgroups or products in the outskirts of each city. Few of them were specialised in genre.

The strong music identity of Manchester meant that many of its non-specialist music stores like HMV promote 'Manchester products' (figure 18). There was never a Brno section in any of its creative-orientated shops. Sometimes they had a Czech section. This was often the case for music chains and bookstores.

It appears that the specialised shops (e.g., indie record stores) provide flyers, free newspapers and posters advertising places (whether music or fashion) similar to them. This recommendation seems to influence where those potential customers who may buy art and related materials went (in and out of the city). For example, if I see someone in the café Koffee Pot I can almost guarantee their attendance at gigs at the Deaf institute, their drinking at Big Hands, and their shopping at Piccadilly Records. When some informants name checked one of these places, they often mentioned the other places as well. This could prompt tribalisation of creative consumers. I remember during the late 1980s and 1990s some of my Mancunian cousins, who liked what is commonly known as 'pop' music, would never set foot in Afflecks because they saw the place as only for 'Grebos'.<sup>174</sup> The probable manifestation of tribal linkage of creative-orientated shops may limit pools of resources, which could lead to lock-in (Boschma, 2005).

Venues that specialise in hosting events (such as concert halls and theatres) are useful in showing a product because they bring people together like shopping centres and shops; however, they tend to attract like-minded people

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<sup>173</sup> The performers claimed this by writing it on a cardboard box next to them. However, I could not verify this, as I have never seen television shows like Britain's Got Talent and X Factor.

<sup>174</sup> Those who like alternative rock, post-punk, garage punk, electronic, industrial music genre.

who have preference to specific genres. Take the example of Manchester; Manchester Academy is a venue for contemporary musicians' performances, while Bridgewater Hall caters for classical music. This limits networking opportunities, access to a wider range of resource pools, and again could lead to lock-in.

Another problem of purpose-built large capacity gig and theatre venues is that they are just open during an event, and are often redundant at other times. Therefore, these places are not useful for creatives most of the time. However, many of these places are attached to cafés, pubs or restaurants, which are observed as meeting places for creatives. One explanation is that these places are either close to the city centre or near public transport stops, therefore, easy to find.

### **Play activities and the urban playscapes indirect impact on creative production**

The short review of the relationship between culture and land use in chapter two highlighted the belief that creatives' work activities may occur in places shaped by the urban playscape (Chatterton & Hollands, 2002). We will also see that other destinations for leisure pursuits could also have an impact on a creative's practice.

People have their preferences and not all creatives choose to find entertainment in the same places. I have seen and experienced that the most common motivation to 'go and play' is to know that at least one other person is willing to go to the place with them. For example, people will go to an art gallery preview if they knew that a friend was also going. Hence, I heard people talking about what they will do on a certain day or if other people were interested in going to a particular event. These advance arrangements are often amongst those with strong bonds like friends and family. The more desperate is a creative to go out, the more likely that they start asking their weaker ties either by 'going down the list' until someone agrees to go out or by bumping into an acquaintance like a co-worker. There were times when I fulfilled that role for my informants.

There are different types of play activities engaged by creatives depending on what they find enjoyable. The activities that I observed or heard spoken about: included reading, holidays, clubbing, gardening, films and television programmes (normally DVDs and streaming), exercise, short breaks in the countryside, visiting parents, and festivals. In other words, a creative activity could be anywhere and at anytime, not exclusively in a 'creative cluster'.

A common difference between Manchester and Brno creatives is that it appears

Brnoites' are more inclined to find play (and other work)<sup>175</sup> activities out of the city,<sup>176</sup> while Mancunians have a tendency to stay in the city. This can be observed in the city centre where the Manchester shopping and drinking areas are crowded, and there is a relatively high footfall on the city streets in comparison to Brno. This is conceivably linked to Bren's (2002) account of the communist legacy of tramping and chatas suggesting common use of the countryside.<sup>177</sup> However, not everyone in Czech Republic owns chatas and tramping does not seem to be as popular as it once was.

If Mancunian creatives do travel, it seems that they tend to take the train while those from Brno prefer to use the coach.<sup>178</sup> Two facts could explain Brnoites' frequent long journeys and high travel tolerance to seek play activities. Firstly, their work requires frequent trips to other cities because the people creatives tend to work with are not all in Brno. Secondly, almost every Czech and Slovakian creative I spoke to had spent many childhood holidays in former Yugoslavia, *via* car journeys, therefore, long distance travelling by road is not unusual for many Brno creatives. All of them travelled to South East Europe by car, which is about a seven hours travel time. It appears to be such a common occurrence that several of my Croatian friends (who do not know each other) have the same joke about Czechs wearing sandals, socks, carrying a plastic bag and drowning in the sea.<sup>179</sup>

With regard to holidays, not all Brno creatives go to South East Europe. Many of them told me of spending the holidays working abroad: one artist and filmmaker normally works as a tour guide in Bulgaria or Romania, and, for the past two years, a fashion designer closed her shop over the summer so that she could go tobacco picking in countries like Germany. From those I met, it appears that the creatives in their mid-20s are more inclined to take working holidays. This fact that Brno creatives find jobs abroad and therefore have access to new resource pools could be useful in the 'thinking' phase of creative production. More will be discussed in the second income section of chapter eight. Manchester informants told me that they or their colleagues tend to spend their holidays on vacation, rather than working. In terms of using the holiday to

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<sup>175</sup> Such as to find inspiration, socialise, sell, exhibit, cooperate, etc.

<sup>176</sup> The majority of people (not just creatives) go to their hometown or the countryside. I have seen this first hand. Even though the Brno fieldwork was during the autumn and winter period, I have been to snow-filled countryside with creatives.

<sup>177</sup> See page 74 for explanations of tramping and the chata.

<sup>178</sup> The exception to the requirement of travelling *via* a direct mass transit route is when they are choosing a flight. The price is often the priority factor. I have seen Manchester creatives using Liverpool John Lennon Airport and Brno creatives using Prague, Vienna or Bratislava airports when catching a flight with a low cost airline. From both fieldworks, I noticed that more of my Manchester informants flew; notwithstanding the fact that their Brno counterparts still seemed to be out of the city more often.

<sup>179</sup> I have not seen any facts about the number of Czechs drowning in the Adriatic Sea, I assume that it is black humour stemming from Czech Republic being a land locked country and presume the countrymen are not used to tidal waves.



aid creative production, they are exposed to new cultures and ways of thinking, but generally, not new resource pools.

A similarity between the majority of creatives that I met in both Manchester and Brno is that they try to avoid going out to certain places in the city and rather go to places where they feel comfortable in. When I went to the Czech language summer school in Brno, which was before I carried out the fieldwork, I had already met a Slovakian New Media Artist living in the city. One night I wanted to combine meeting the creative and going out with other people at the summer school. Those from the summer school decided to go to a club called Charlie's Hat. It is popular with tourists, expats and Czechs who want to 'pick-up' foreigners. When I called the creative and suggested meeting at the club, she laughed and told me that she preferred to meet up in Spolek and suggested that I could meet my friends later. I went to Charlie's Hat several times during the fieldwork and never saw any of my informants in the club. With regard to places creatives tend to avoid in Manchester, the common area is Deansgate and the bars under the arches on Great Bridgewater Street. One sculptor went as far to say he 'wouldn't touch it with a bargepole'. Like Charlie's Hat, these clubs and pubs play 'cheesy pop', are packed with tourists and consist of locals who want to 'large it'.<sup>180</sup> It seems that creatives have their preferred places to go out. Like shops and venues, in the previous section, this limits creatives' exposure to new people and resources; reinforcing tribal networks and innovative lock-in.

I have seen creatives in non creative-orientated places similar to Charlie's Hat and pubs around the Deansgate area. They tell me that it is a good place to avoid other creatives. Whenever one Brno painter, musician and a manager of a popular music venue for musicians, has enough disposable income, he would avoid hanging around the club he manages<sup>181</sup> and go to U Bláhovky, which is a traditional pub. He told me that he goes to traditional pubs as a means to escape from the Art World.

A well-known Manchester DJ in his 40s only organises meetings in the Northern Quarter between morning and mid-afternoon. At this time of the day, he said that strangers (whether creatives or not) do not talk to him; if he had meetings in the evening he would be constantly talked to and asked to pose for pictures. He told me that he stopped going out there for fun at night citing that the area is 'full of people talking endless nonsense to you' and the area loses any 'integrity as a creative area'. This is not an isolated opinion in Manchester. I have been out

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<sup>180</sup> "Larging it - A British slang term describing a boisterous and usually drink-fuelled social state/attitude where persons "larging it" or "larging it up" are loud, noisy and playing around in a good humoured but macho way. Depending on the context, it can also be a way of squaring up against others without physical contact during real confrontations - a little bit like "mentally" sticking one's chest out as a sign of toughness, pretending to be tougher than one really is" (Urban Dictionary, 2006).

<sup>181</sup> The creative only goes to the club because he can drink for free.

with some from the creative 'blurred edges', all between mid to late 30s; we ended up in a bar at the Northern Quarter at 1am because it was the only area (other than Deansgate) that had pubs that stayed open into the early hours. The people drinking at the Northern Quarter from the evening appear to be in the early 20s to mid 30s. McRobbie (2011) was correct in saying that night-time sociality is not inclusive of all creatives.

Playscapes may not have a typical look or location, but play activities are important for creatives. I have observed two purposes: to achieve escapism (as a way to relax) or to form bonding activities.

Almost all of the creatives I met used play activities as a means to escape at least once during my fieldwork. I noticed that those who did this most often were those who clustered live, work and play activities at close geographical proximity. Escape is often done through physical isolation, overindulging of substances or going to a club and 'getting lost in the music'. The latter is close to the influence of noise on collective behaviour explored in the '*culture & land use*' section in chapter two.

For those whose workplaces are well spread geographically, escaping is not always about achieving hedonism for long periods of the day. There are times when the creatives need to temporarily escape from their work for a moment, i.e. grazing.<sup>182</sup> I have met creatives who had installed special facilities in their workplace to help: see figure 19 for an example. These brief supporting activities allow moments to relax and refocus on 'thinking' and 'doing' activities.

Play activities may also help future networking opportunities. Food and drink is normally involved for this bonding exercise. Alcohol was particularly useful. For example, after drinking a certain amount of alcohol, the drunker the potential informants became, the more socialising inhibitions were lost and they were more likely to start a conversation with me (and in English in the case of many Brno creatives).

A conversation can only be maintained if the people talking have mutual interests or a wide range of common subject knowledge. Activities like watching a movie, going to a football match or going to a concert can be experienced by many people and provide the possibility of a shared memory for future discussions. When I managed to get a ticket for Antony & The Johnsons, it allowed me to connect with a friend of my informant, because the informant acquainted us by stating that we both went to the gig. We spoke about it and

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<sup>182</sup> One Manchester creative use the term 'grazing' to describe quick activities that are not related to the work, but used it as a way to break-up or postpone the task. Activities include staying in bed a little longer; making toast; see who is on The Jeremy Kyle Show; playing games; thinking of new ideas for projects (even though he or she just began one) and what Becker (1982) calls the 'support activities' like cleaning. More details in chapter nine.

connected when we both agreed about the terrible support act. From then on, we gave passing acknowledgements, like nodding to each other, whenever we bumped into each other. Antony & The Johnsons is a well-known group who won the esteemed Mercury Prize, then Mercury Music Prize. Attending a gig of theirs could be a future conversation piece for anyone interested in this music anywhere in the world. This is best described as a 'genre reference point'. I have also observed local, national and international 'reference points'.



Figure 19: A set of darts and a book of dart scores in a photographer's studio unit in Manchester. When I asked him about the places he goes to when relaxing, he opened a drawer showing me the darts and book, and walked me to the darkroom where there is a dartboard. When I asked about pubs, he told me he was over 50 and those drinking days are long gone. His escape from the world was his grandchildren. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009.

'Local reference points' are things such as street parties, local gossip, etc. 'National reference points' are matters of common national interest. I have had many conversations about British and European politics (even in the Czech Republic). The best topic that I found in Manchester was Football. A common activity in Manchester seemed to be following the football world – it did not matter if the creatives were not originally from Manchester – all of them were aware of it and had an opinion on football when asked. I once had to stop short a visit to a studio for the Manchester versus Barcelona football match in the

Champions League final because my informant wanted to watch the game. Talking about football was very useful during my Manchester fieldwork. Sadly, the same could not be said for the national sport, ice hockey, in Brno. Along with football, ice hockey is one of the most popular sports in the Czech Republic. Brno has the second most successful ice hockey team in the Czech Republic, but many Brno creatives are oblivious of this fact. There was an important play-off match during the time of my fieldwork in Brno. The whole of Brno was full of drunken people wearing blue and white clothes (The local ice hockey team colours) and singing and cheering ice hockey chants. There was no sign of this euphoria, nor any sign of anyone wearing any ice hockey paraphernalia, when I went inside a couple of creative-orientated cafés and pubs. I felt it was easier to talk about the economy with Brno creatives and non-creatives, especially as it was the time when many European countries were in recession. The recession would be an ‘international reference point’.

Play activities that gathers people can be useful for both networking and escaping (therefore, relaxing). However, it could inhibit the thinking and doing phases if the creatives overindulge on play activities.

### **The importance of moving around**

It appears that creatives use various places to perform a range of activities, some of which could clash with other activities. It would therefore be wrong to assume that a creative works in one regular place or indeed a milieu where they work. Instead, all my informants seem to have multiple places that they would consider their regular workplaces (see chapter nine for more details). This can be for various reasons. The ones that I had recognised were as follows:

- *Nature of the work:* In all the cases I saw the places for creative production and the market places were not in the same area; in many cases they were not in the same city. This means that creatives must travel between workplaces to achieve all necessary creative activities. This can be seen in the case of a Brno VJ where he created his products on his computer at home (figure 20) and brought his desktop to the club (figure 21) because the images were too big to be transferred virtually, and then projected them during a club night in Fléda (figure 22). The only requirement he has for a location for the VJ presentation production is access to a good Wi-Fi.



Figure 20: VJ working at his home in Brno. Sometimes he found new images at the office where he works (for his second income), where the Internet connection was fast. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2008.



Figure 21: The VJ with his desktop computer and other kit getting on a tram to Fléda. He had to take two trams when commuting between his home and Fléda. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2008.

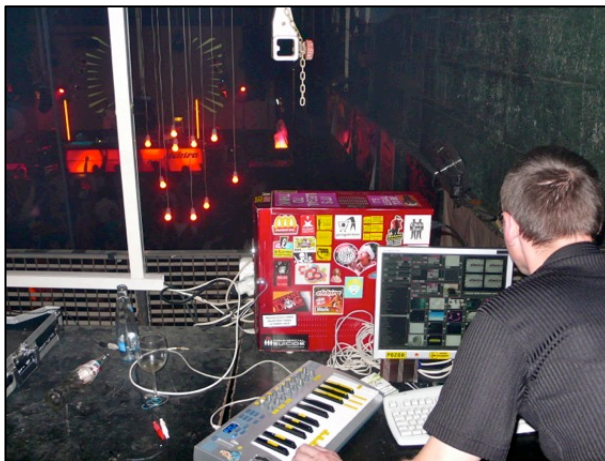


Figure 22: The VJ performing at the club night. He used the vantage point of being able to look down at the dances and could see the reaction from the crowd. He also received feedback and new ideas from other VJs that were also working at the club night. He finished at 3am so he left his equipment in Fléda overnight and collected it the next day. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2008.

- *Seeking individuality through multiple ‘thinking’ places:* For example, one Brno graphic designer shares an office with other designers but is often found in one of three different cafés every day; he also works at his girlfriend’s home in Budapest. My informants normally mentioned the café as another workplace; other than the Spolek (at Brno’s city centre) and CUP (in the Manchester’s Northern Quarter) where the main objective is usually to meet people, the creatives tend to change cafés regularly. Most of them have a tendency to try working in a newly opened café or pub.

There was a Manchester creative who also mixed collective and individual workplaces because the collective workplace was useful for networking, collective thinking, and critiquing activities, but she added that isolation allows her to develop her own ‘voice’ away from a collective identity. Hence, she took a strategic step, stopped being a resident at a semi-private workplace, and ‘floated’ between workplaces for a year. She worked from home, ‘squatted’ in other people’s workplaces or worked as an Artist in Residence. She found that changing workplaces helped her meet new people, exchange fresh ideas and viewpoints and form new networks. I have known a few creatives who left, or were planning to leave the city for over a year to break away from a collective identity.

It seems that having different environments for different ‘thinking’ activities exposes a creative to different people with different resources, but also enables him or her to take different mental approaches to their practice.

- *Providing thinking distance:* I have seen many cases when creatives take a long time off from what could be considered as the regular workplace for their ‘doing’ activity. I have observed several ways of achieving this: some take short-term educational courses, some take a short-term contract for an unrelated job, and many take holidays. It was difficult to arrange meetings around the Christmas and summer periods. I was told that most people in semi-private workplaces<sup>183</sup> have a tendency not to work in these units in winter because they are too cold to work. The rented workplace normally becomes a storage room.
- *Separating ‘doing’ activities:* In most cases creatives have one regular workplace for the doing phase. However, I have seen one case where a Manchester ceramist considers herself to have three main workplaces when making a product. She has one workplace at home, where a room is dedicated for administrative and ‘thinking’ tasks and another for the

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<sup>183</sup> Places that offer individual studio units and have space as public venues.

production of commercial products; she is also a resident of Islington Mill where she has a large space for the production of commissions; and, a final workplace was her use of a place, called *From Space*, as a place to experiment, develop new ideas for a new product. The three workplaces were not only a way to provide mental separation, but also a practical way to separate the different types of clay needed for the three separate products.

- *Experimenting and finding new audiences:* The performance or displays of subgroups have a tendency to relate to places. For example, fine artists tend to exhibit work in galleries. From what I have observed, it appears that the consumers of products of certain subgroups also have similar tendencies. Nevertheless, I have seen attempts by creatives to appropriate unusual spaces for themselves.

For instance, the performance subgroup venues are usually set in: performance halls, theatres, cafés and pubs and stages on large open spaces. These venues are commonly used as the platform for performance artists showing creative products to the public, in person, with technicians (e.g., actors), or as screenings. However, there are times performance artists try to appropriate alternative locations to expose themselves to an audience (figure 23). The typical alternative spaces are often free and busy places where there are many by-passers, such as public spaces or as Edensor, et al. (2010) suggested vernacular spaces.

It appears that there is a preference for creatives to utilise many places for their practice. However, I found this is not entirely possible for some creative communities; this is because of physical connectivity issues. As discussed in chapter five, some places are somewhat isolated from the rest of the city. Kamenná kolonie in Brno and Chorlton in Manchester were mentioned. I did go to Kamenná kolonie and lived with an informant close to Chorlton. Yet, not many creatives that I met in both areas were my informants. I believe this is because they did not fit within the NMA and SCCW networks. I can explain this with my own experience when living in Bramhall, a suburb of the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport, where there is also a creative enclave of its own, with its own café that they use for gathering activities. There was a limited, infrequent, expensive public transport to Manchester city centre. The last train was 23:14 meaning that I was always afraid of missing the train and could not attend many events. Creatives in isolated clusters seem to become disconnected from the city, which restricts the available workplaces and, consequently, limits the possibility of becoming acquainted with new people and other group activities. This also limits access to a large pool of resources and attaining feedback; subsequently, leading to what Boschma (2005) would call innovative 'lock-in'.





Figure 23: Dancers practicing at the same time as a concert in Manchester Art Gallery for the Manchester International Festival July 2009. The performance was a floor below the concert performance. It caught people's attention because we heard loud music, which made us walk downstairs. The dancers were not part of the festival's programme but took the opportunity to perform to a large crowd who normally attend other art forms. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.

A city that provides a good creative production environment should allow creatives to both come together and escape from each other. There seems to be a natural tendency for creatives' work activities to spread across the city and go out of the city. At the same time, creatives need to come together in order to form new networks and prevent 'lock-in'. Providing good physically connective infrastructures and play activities that provoke creatives to come together and stay for a long time could do this. It is also important to note that play activities provide a chance to 'escape' from their work; it could seem counterproductive, but is important as it aids the 'relax' activity and is another way of promoting the act of networking.



## **Chapter 8: The creative market (and other supporting activities)**

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Activities during creative production are generally time-consuming and have their costs; selling goods and services through the creative market is often thought of as the way creatives fund future production. Yet, I have met few creatives who were able to do this. This section will explain how creatives pay for these overheads as well as their quality of life. They seek funding through several sources.

The majority of this chapter observes on how creatives commodify their creative output and seek additional funds. It will also consider how extra revenues may positively and negatively influence a creative's practice.

The final part of this chapter will look at how creatives pool and share material resources, as a method to cut overheads during creative production.

### **Showing and selling work**

The 'showing' phase of creative production (see chapter seven) is also an integral part of the creative market. This phase is primarily when creatives enter the market and distribute their goods or perform their services to the public. The aims are to get the information out to people (either consumers or clients) that such product or creative service exists. Here, there is heavy reliance on non-creatives like cultural gatekeepers – just like finding media exposure and distributors in the 'thinking' phase. It appears almost all creatives from both case study cities and their subgroups need to travel to core cities and/or other cities. As Robinson (2009) suggested, these industries still rely on core cities for specialised services responsible for enabling the 'showing' phase.

I observed that different creative subgroups, and at times genres, split off to their specialised workplaces in specific cities. However, the heavy reliance on footfall and attracting non-creatives during the 'showing' phase, workplaces appear to have similar features, such as being located close to public transport hubs. When discussing this phase, I will only report on one genre of one subgroup, indie music, and how it relates to Manchester and Brno. By focusing on indie music, this will resonate with the study results of Hauge & Hracs (2010) and Cohen (2007), which focused on the same type of music. As this section moves on and begins to report on the consumption of creative goods and services, we will start to discuss other subgroups because there are different consumption patterns between both cities.

Just as creatives working as technicians should not be seen as creatives, this could also be said for creatives at the 'showing' phase. Promoting and performing a piece of work does not always equate with a creative practice. When The Quietus (2010) asked Black Francis, frontman of the Pixies, about

reforming the band and touring without releasing a new album, he replied:

*"[...] if people really wanna know what's gonna happen with the Pixies, they need to talk to promoters and agents. That's where the business is right now - in the live market. And they're the ones that decide all this shit. [...] We're interested in anything that's going to earn us a fair wage. It's not to say it's not about art, but we made that art fucking twenty years ago. So forget the fucking goddamn art. This ain't about the art anymore. I did the arty farty part. Now it's time to talk about the money."* (Black Francis on *The Quietus*, 2010)

There are local promoters and live venues in Brno and Manchester, so performances are not a problem. Yet, there are problems in each city. Venues rarely sell out in the Czech Republic. I never attended a sold-out gig during my fieldwork in Brno. Furthermore, the country (even Prague) often fails to regularly attract internationally renowned touring performers, even though it is strategically placed between Berlin and Vienna, which are the normal cities used during world tours. Manchester seems to have the problem of having too many venues and gigs – from regional, national, and international artists – so that gig goers becomes thinly spread. Yet, there seems to be enough demand to fill a venue outside the normal gig venues of the Northern Quarter and Oxford Road compared with one of the best known gig venues in Czech Republic, Fléda, even without any other gigs or club nights to compete with. As Cohen (2007) suggested, Manchester seems to have significant music consumption capacity to provide income to more creatives than other second order cities.

There may be demand for music consumption in Manchester. This does not mean the musicians work only in Manchester. A drummer from a hyped band often goes to London to meet record company officials, advertisers, and the media. They even had to go to London to promote their new record and play a live session for the radio station Xfm. This is despite the station having a studio in Manchester. Even though Cohen (2007) commented that Manchester indie musicians are relatively self-sufficient, when compared with Liverpool musicians, there is evidence that cultural and creative industries still rely on core cities for specialised services responsible for enabling the 'showing' phase.

I have noticed that all performers (whether musicians, in theatre, etc.) attempt to show their work around the world. Successful creatives from other subgroups also travel to other cities in order to promote their work.<sup>184</sup> However, they send their agents whenever they do not want to spend any time on this phase.

Creatives may aim to produce unique creative goods or services. Yet, for them to reach the attention of potential consumers, the cognitive direction of the goods or services should be identifiable or at least relates with recognisable categories of tastes. The examples for musicians could be Punk, Electroclash or indie. The benefit to categorising goods and services is that the marketplace

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<sup>184</sup> I mean successful as in that they are able to survive only by funds generated from their artwork.

could specialise, e.g., people who tend to consume indie music can go to indie record shops like Manchester's Piccadilly Records. This makes goods or services easier to find, and this is especially useful as the creative market is a global entity. Many Brno and Manchester creatives have told me that they rely on global, rather than local, consumers.

Consumption of creative goods seems especially low in Brno. For instance, I reported above that when attending concerts or plays, these venues hardly ever reach full capacity. Galleries were badly attended – even on Museum Night when it is free to enter. There were only two specialist music shops. Also, of the two fashion shops in the city, one closed down during my fieldwork.

Manchester's creative market, on the other hand, seems to be in a slightly better situation. It consists of numerous fashion shops in the Northern Quarter as well as other parts of Manchester, several independent music shops, and some gigs sell-out within a day of the tickets being released on sale. Of course, it is not at the same scale as London, but is impressive when compared with Brno. Some creatives at these workplaces told me sales had increased when they installed a credit card reader. This may be obvious, but there are still many shops, galleries, clubs, cafés, bars and concert venues in both cities that do not have this facility.

When compared to other types of creative outputs, performances seem to be relatively well attended in both cities. The profiles of the attendees are noticeably different. People attending Manchester gigs and plays are from a wide range of ages and of many ethnicities. This is also true for specialist genres like 'drone doom'.<sup>185</sup> The audiences going to theatre performances in Brno are equally as diverse in age, but not in ethnicity and nationality, possibly because almost all plays are in Czech with no subtitles. Attendees for contemporary gigs in venues like Fléda were normally of university age (about late teens until late 20s) and surprisingly show still not much ethnic and national diversity. I knew some expats who did go clubbing but not to gigs unless they came from outside Czech Republic (all poster advertisements show where all the performers come from). This made me stand out more distinctively in the crowd and therefore I was noticed by at least one Brno musician when she pointed at my direction and called me 'their new Japanese friend' at one point of the gig.

Fine art creatives in both cities found it especially difficult to sell in the local art market. There were few places where artists could sell their work in Manchester and Brno, although some Manchester fine and plastic art creatives had reported the possibility of selling artwork locally. However, the commercial galleries are

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<sup>185</sup> I attended a day-long festival of this genre in Islington Mill on 18 April 2009.

of a certain taste, which an informant branded 'Ted Baker Art'.<sup>186</sup> 'Individuality reflexivity' (O'Connor, 1998) in the pattern/trend of consumption of art seems to mismatch the type of art that is produced by Manchester fine and plastic artists. After reviewing the Czech and UK cultural consumption in chapter five, the result of Manchester creatives selling locally more than Brno's was to be expected.

Plastic artists in the Arts and Crafts field appear to have a market in Brno and Manchester. Crafts shops in both cities had generally different locations. Brno's were usually out-of-town, normally in villages and small towns. Kreja (2006) suggested it was because that was where crafts are traditionally made, which became an opportunistic way of promoting 'a coachload of tourist consumption' through their traditional arts and crafts.<sup>187</sup> The shop is usually the ancillary of the factory (i.e., the main entrance is to the factory), which has the benefit of limiting transport costs and breakages of the more fragile items, but the downside is that it is harder to catch impulse buyers.

The production and selling of crafts in the same place was also noted in Manchester, but there were three differences: first, the production space was the ancillary of the shop. Secondly, the units are smaller. Finally, they were located closer to the city centre. They could do this because the objects were not mass-produced which reduced the size of the machinery and storage space required. The reason for the central location was to catch impulse buyers. As we have seen in chapter five, there were more cultural consumers in Manchester than in Brno. For this to happen the shops need to be situated where there is high footfall, hence most of them being close to the Northern Quarter. There was one crafts shop, 'From Space', that was located in a more remote area. It was a unit given to Islington Mill for free by the owner (the architect who redesigned the Mill's engine house). 'From Space' was meant to be used as a shop for the residents, but very few people entered the shop. One potter looked after the shop and subsequently also used it as her studio. Because of the street's low footfall, it attracted few customers, but was more of a place where people from Islington Mill and their friends came to learn pottery<sup>188</sup> and cooperate. The fieldwork allowed me to experience how 'From Space's' land use shifted from a selling and showing workplace and adapted towards doing and thinking activities. Duijzings (2011) comments on the fluidity of the urban environment are an important consideration, especially if some workplaces rely on the external environment, like footfall. If it changes so will the use of the workplace.

It seems that creatives are not limited to selling work in their hometown. There

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<sup>186</sup> The informant sees this type of artwork as having little artistic quality but sellable.

<sup>187</sup> I went to one of these factories as a Czech summer school daytrip.

<sup>188</sup> There, I learnt pottery and was entrusted to teach others.

are many cases where creatives rely on selling their goods and services in their respective capital city: one successful Mancunian artist who can live solely on her artwork said that she meets her buyers because part of the art of buying is to know the artist, which means that she is frequently travelling to London. A Brno fashion designer sells her work with a shop in Prague because she feels that she sells more clothes and accessories in Prague.

The Internet has been a potential tool used by creatives to directly sell their products to a wider audience. There is a Czech fashion designer who is not comfortable with her English so she only sells her products through a Czech website (without pages in other languages). When in London, I tried to buy some artisan buttons from a Czech designer. Since I saw the webpage was in English, I wrote an e-mail, in English, about ordering the buttons. The designer never replied. It seems that Internet customers are mainly Czechs, Slovaks and from some other Slavic countries.

Manchester creatives seem to have a more global catchment of Internet clients. The main customers of one Mancunian designer are Germans. She has never been to Germany and only sells through a website that is only in English. According to the designer, her popularity in Germany is due to her style and ecological principles. I have also been informed by other Manchester creatives from other subgroups that most of their works are also consumed through the Internet and their consumers are mainly not from Britain. Having, English as a universal language appears to be beneficial to the Manchester creatives.

It thus seems that many creatives struggle to sell the majority of their creative outputs in Manchester and Brno. As we will also see, O'Connor (1998) was correct in stating that there are multiple channels for consumption within the globalised creative market.<sup>189</sup> I did ask creatives where they sold their art, however, there were problems in providing a full analysis of this ethnographic investigation of Manchester and Brno creatives' interaction with the global creative market, as I had imposed myself restrictions to stay within the city boundaries during the fieldwork.<sup>190</sup> In hindsight, I should have asked my informants to provide me all the places they sold their artworks for a full ethnographic investigation. Since the sales are being initiated from within a city (creatives' home bases), this makes the city-bound limitation less important. But there may have been time-constraint problems due the extra time required for me to complete the research.

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<sup>189</sup> It is also worth remembering that as some creatives are increasingly becoming reliant on selling through the Internet, so does their reliance on the postal services grows. This means that some creatives' working hours are based on the post office timetables.

<sup>190</sup> However, I did go to some other places just out of interest.

## **Commissions**

I met creatives in both cities from a host of subgroups who did commissioned work. The commissions need not be in their home cities. The people commissioning work ranged from private individuals to department stores to large corporations. Commissions are normally short-term projects and follow approaches by the client, who liked the creative's previous catalogue of work. The creative inputs when doing commissions are minimal and working hours become more rigid.

I have heard many creatives in Manchester and Brno using commissions as a way to pay for or subsidise their next (personal) experiential piece. After the experiment comes to a natural end, and if not commercially viable, the creative would normally position themselves for another commission, and the cycle continues.

## **Seeking financial aid**

Of all the creatives that I met in my life, very few of them can survive solely by selling their goods and services. I have also met some who have no desire to commodify their creative output. So how do these creatives sustain a living? Seeking governmental financial aid is one method.

Chapter two points out that local government, especially planners, in England are more favourable towards investing in workplaces that are containers for creative activities, like Islington Mill and Castlefield Gallery. However, the 2008 – 2010 economic downturns and the 2012 London Olympic development reduced the amount of funding available to The Arts as a whole, making obtaining funding and sponsorships even harder. The apparent difficulties in obtaining funds for Manchester creatives have prompted some of my informants to find scholarships for Masters education. Many of them applied for courses that would qualify them to work as a workplace manager or cultural gatekeeper; courses such as Museum Studies in Glasgow University.

Yet, there is some National and European funding available for start-ups and projects by entrepreneurial Manchester creatives; some of my informants told me that they did not apply for these funds because they found the application process long and complicated.

According to my Czech informants, national funding for The Arts is more for highbrow culture and centralised in Prague. If Brno creatives rely on governmental funding, they tend to obtain those at European level. Just as with their Manchester counterparts, they will have to fill-in a long and bureaucratic application form. Unlike their Manchester counterparts, they are more willing and trained to fill in the forms and make the necessary cross-border

cooperation required in the application. For example, funds from the Visegrád Group can only be obtained if they form a partnership with another group from Slovakia, Poland or Hungary. This is good for networking, but also it means that they must work in a different language and a mixture of cultures, which excludes those who can only work in the Czech language. This reinforces the idea of Brno as a 'cooperative, cross-discipline hub' stated in chapter five; rather than as a creative city of its own.

The creatives I met who were most successful at fundraising were two Slovakian creatives in Brno who also taught at art school and had participated in international projects from an early age, i.e., they had good experience with the bureaucracy of international cooperation and understood how to direct a project for governmental objectives, such as economy regeneration and social inclusion.

### **Second incomes**

Very few of my informants have ever successfully obtained public funds. Finding a second income is the normal way creatives fund the production of their goods or services and maintain their certain standard of living. I broadly observed three types of second income, which my informants tended to find: working in a creative-orientated workplace; becoming a technician; or, finding a job that is not related to the Art World or their practice.

Many of my informants had jobs that related to the cultural and creative industry; almost all of them worked flexi-time and were paid minimal wages in cultural institutes, venues, or pubs and cafés popular with creatives – many from Brno reported they had worked in Fléda or Spolek, or both and many of those from Manchester spoke of working at the Cornerhouse. Most of these people worked in these places during their 20s and early-30s. Semi-private workplaces (see chapter 9) also offer casual employment. When I was living in Islington Mill, I was in charge of redecorating one of the living spaces. The owner supplied me with a list of artists, whom he trusted and tended to use when offering such jobs. These types of jobs have the potential to strengthen ties with other creatives working at the same place, but lack opportunities to develop skills or widen individual networks. However, these kinds of casual work are certainly not a foot in the door for a creative career. One Manchester sculptor believes there is “a glass ceiling caused by the hierarchical structures [in business operations]”. It is particularly so in situations like working in any bar, shop, or office.

We have already discussed the technicians in chapter six. They apply their skills and knowledge to the commercial world. Most of them are employed full-time. Nevertheless, many of my informants spoke about the benefits; they

spoke about having access to new equipment. Take the Brno VJ who works as an IT technician: his job provides him with fast Wi-Fi and powerful computers with CAD programmes, which enables him to make new designs. A Brno designer is employed by a biochemical company to work on making digital images: he is exposed to new equipment that he could never afford and the company paid for his further education and relocation to Sweden where he gained even more exposure to new digital imaging techniques. A Manchester photographer works for a commercial printer: here he also had access to new tools and a better understanding of the demands in commercial photography. What all of these creatives also had in common is that they were allowed to experiment with the new tools and ideas during their free time.

It is important that a second income should help develop a creative's practice. McRobbie's (1999) comment on dole money enabling creative production activities is an interesting perspective. I would add to McRobbie's (1999) comment that flexi-time jobs that do not relate to the cultural and creative industry may also aid or benefit creative production activities. A painter spoke in a meeting at Islington Mill about how creatives fund themselves. She said that she worked at a greengrocer because it paid the bills, gives her fresh fruit and vegetables for free, and provided the required 'headspace' from painting (see the 'thinking' phase in '*the work phases*' section in chapter seven). She added that having time to escape from her creative practice allows her to talk to many types of people and widen her perception of the world, and it allows her time to become more objective with her work.

For both Manchester and Brno creatives, there are benefits to finding a second income. However, like any job, it consumes time that could be spent on the creatives' practice, and is energy draining. This can potentially restrict 'thinking' and 'doing' activities. I have seen and heard of cases where the second income dominates their life so much that they stop working as a creative. This is often the case for those with jobs that were related to the cultural and creative industry. For example, one person accepted the position as a store manager and another became a full-time waitress because they were better-paid jobs.

### **Sharing material resources**

There were two common problems with material resources in Manchester and Brno. The first being the cost of the materials needed for the production and experimentation of a product. The second is to have access to the material resources. Not all are easy to obtain; usually because there are few in number, too expensive, or simply not available in the city.

Many Brno creatives who worked with paint told me of the lack of shops supplying good quality (but affordable) paints. Some people go to shops in



Prague or Vienna, or buy from the Internet. However, many who I spoke to decide to turn their attention to the New Media Art as the genre in this case is based on electronics and the traditional visual arts inclusive, therefore, could be easily sold through virtual platforms. This was many of my Brno informants' solution for the cost and accessibility issues.

I did not notice resource availability influencing the style of a creative practice in Manchester. Instead, I noticed individuals collecting their own materials and equipment, and hording them in their own storage space. As these creatives keep their own work materials and equipment, there are potentially a vast amount of different types of resources in a city (e.g., Manchester, as mentioned) for sharing. As Eriksen (2001) mentioned, there are three main principles in the circulation of material goods: "reciprocity, redistribution and market exchange" (p. 184). These resources are circulated amongst a creative milieu between, or inside creative's networks.

A creative milieu like Islington Mill has the benefit of having a physical hub where surplus material resources can be physically pooled and shared (figure 24) or expensive equipment can be collectively bought and used. Such equipment can be specialised machinery like industrial scale printers.

I have also seen resources being pooled in creative milieus through creatives bartering with workplace managers. Figures 25 and 26 are pictures of old printing tools and equipment that was left behind as rent payment when a former studio tenant could not pay the rent. They found value when the studio owner's partner used them for a project and for printing advertisements.

I have heard that exchanges of resources between creatives and their networks are generally done *via* informal personalised exchanges like bartering, or countertrade, rather than commercial trade. A creative's material resource need not only be used to exchange for other material resources but also with people's time or knowledge. For example, some creatives make dinner for someone who provided technical help.

People must have some element of trust (normally by being acquainted, but also being members of a collective workplace – see chapter nine) before any exchange of any resources can take place. However, the resources are not equally distributed amongst people. The more frequent and valuable exchanges seem to be when the donor<sup>191</sup> and the recipient have strong social ties.

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<sup>191</sup> The donor could be a person, a group of people in a creative milieu, or an organisation.

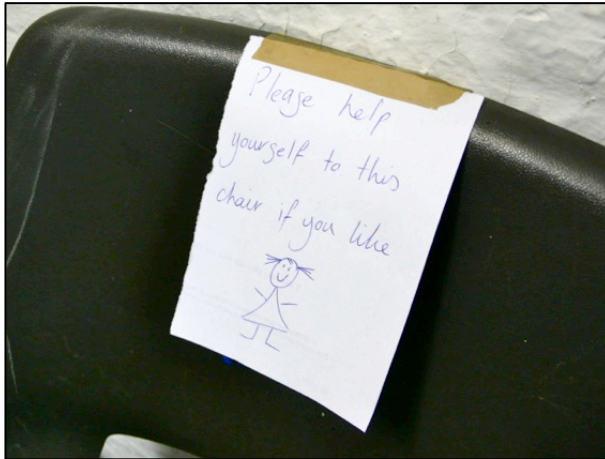


Figure 24: A chair left on the third floor corridor of Islington Mill by someone moving studios. It was left for anyone who had access to the third floor. The entrances to the corridors were locked. Only the residents of the floor, workplace managers, and I knew the codes to floors. This resource was shared amongst those physically, not socially, linked, even if they did not know each other. Hence, the note stuck on the chair instead of knocking on the doors and asking if anyone needed a chair. Not everyone talked to their studio neighbours. Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009.

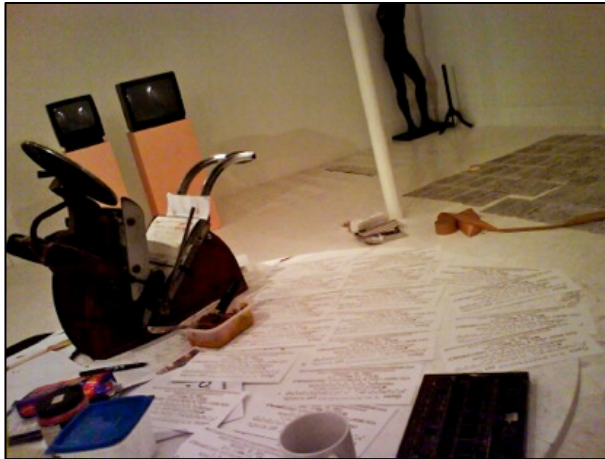


Figure 25: A small printing press left by a former resident of Islington Mill because he could not afford to pay the rent. It became the property of Islington Mill and used by its residents. The picture was taken when the owner of Islington Mill used the printing press to print leaflets. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2009.

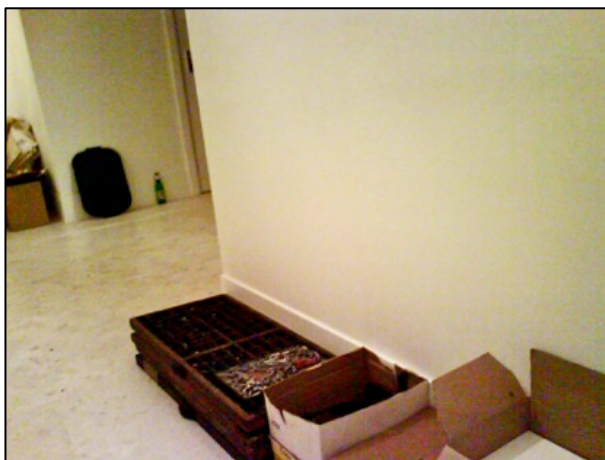


Figure 26: Movable type pieces in a wooden case that also came with the small printing press. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2009.

This chapter has reported on the limitations experienced by creatives operating within a local cultural and creative industry. Access to funding and a large pool of resources is fundamental to the development of a unique service or product. This can be achieved by widening networks beyond the hometown and the art world. Also reported was that having strong ties with creative hubs has the added benefit of providing information of funding opportunities and facilitates the sharing of resources.

## Chapter 9: Workplaces

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During my first Manchester scoping study, there was a Manchester conceptual art collective with a project that attempted a mapping exercise to 'navigate the Manchester Art Scene'.<sup>192</sup> They found the spaces of the said scene by inviting people to fill in a survey at a place called the Cornerhouse.

I approached the collective for their filled-in surveys. After they found out I was a planner, they seemed to become less communicative and sceptical when talking to me. For instance, one of the members told me that 'I wouldn't be interested' in their work because they ranged from residential streets to places like Islington Mill to a specific tree on a certain street. They even cited terms like 'gentrification' and 'megaprojects', and presumed I would only be interested in places like the ones mentioned during the creative policy critique in the literature review in chapter five. I was only presented with 98 samples of answered surveys.<sup>193</sup>

It seemed from the art collective's answered surveys that there are many spaces and places that could make up a creative scene; not all of them can be planned specifically for the cultural and creative industry. Therefore, it may not be possible to make a comprehensive creative planning policy that would aid all activities of all creatives. Nevertheless, whilst reviewing the notes and images collected during the fieldwork, I had observed some commonalities amongst some of these places.

The first three chapters of this ethnography discussion above are concerned with how these differentiations among creatives (in chapter six) and activities (in chapters seven and eight) relate to space and place. There is a special attention placed on trust building and networking, which, I found, are the foundations of knowledge accumulation and the bases of the cultural and creative industry.

This present chapter in particular will cover the typically frequented workplaces used by my informants in Manchester and Brno during the time of the ethnography. I call them 'workplaces'. The workplaces are split into two types: physical and virtual presence. The physical presence is further split into individual and collective workplaces. The virtual presence predominantly means working *via* the Internet. We will see how these different workplaces are connected.

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<sup>192</sup> See <http://www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-exhibitions/navigating-the-manchester-art-scene> for the archive on the project.

<sup>193</sup> I do not have permission to include the samples in this thesis.

### Working in the 'live' space and shared offices

Chapter two discussed live/work units, which could be seen as an individual workplace. As already discussed in chapter seven, I observed some creatives use their homes for work activities that require environments that are more isolated. However, not all activities can be achieved at home; also, if creatives do perform working activities in the dwelling space, it must be managed.

An artist from Amsterdam was going to move to Manchester for a three-month project and needed to find a place to stay. An academic friend of mine knew I was doing my Manchester fieldwork at the time and forwarded my e-mail address. Before arriving in Manchester, the artist e-mailed me asking if I knew of any live/work spaces in Manchester. I was sitting next to a local creative when reading this e-mail. I did not know of anything and asked my informant. He stared at me blankly. If such places exist, they must not be common, as neither a Mancunian creative nor someone studying them knew of one.

It seemed that undertaking the majority of work activities in a space where one lives is also uncommon in Brno. As one Brno informant told me, he only uses his flat as a place to sleep, shower, eat and relax. For him relaxing at home normally involves reading books, surfing the Internet and having friends round for lunch or dinner. I noticed a television at his flat, but like many of my informants they make a point that they rarely watch it. However, some informants have told me of the benefits of working from home. It is usually ideal when mixing everyday activities, like listening to the radio or watching TV, with repetitive menial tasks, like knitting, that does not need constant attention.

The use of the home also depends on the mobility of the creative. One Brno musician reduces the use of the home even further: “[...] I often am moving around. If given the chance, I use it as a base to sleep”. I heard this with several Brno creatives belonging to other subgroups. It seems that they are much more mobile than their Manchester counterparts and have a tendency to travel more. I know of a couple of Brno creatives travelling at least once a week.

As well as a place to sleep, many informants spoke about the dwelling being valuable because of its postcode. One Manchester informant told me that they change workplaces regularly. She believes that her most permanent place is the home. Therefore, she uses it as the correspondence address for deliveries, storage and administrative work.<sup>194</sup>

According to several Brno and Manchester creatives and other people at the blurred edges of creative subgroups, roughly 50% of their work is made up of administration. They tell me that this normally involves: procurements,

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<sup>194</sup> One Manchester conceptual artist stated, “50% of my work is on administration, like chasing up payment and maintaining contacts through the Internet”. The majority of the other 50% is on gathering funds, and developing ideas into products.

promoting work, looking for events to attend, applying for funding, chasing up payment and maintaining contacts through the Internet.

As you can see, administration is also performed using the Internet, which the majority of creatives have at home. A few of my informants told me that the Internet can be a distraction because many of them spoke of giving in to the temptation of looking at viral videos or social network sites when working on the computer; i.e. 'grazing' (see footnote 182 on page 133).

Grazing activities could allow relaxation, give some mental distance from the work, and provide some 'thinking time'. The informant told me that the temptation of grazing is stronger at home because there is no one else looking over him. An example of grazing out of the dwelling could be 'people watching'.

However, there are times when grazing can mutate into something that can overtake a work activity. An informant told me of a story when he made a cup of tea as a break from administrative tasks. He spilled the tea on the floor and table. He started cleaning up the spillage and ended up cleaning the whole house, i.e., procrastination.

If creatives live in dwellings with at least one spare room,<sup>195</sup> I have noticed they use it as something that resembles a study. The administrative work is performed in a room that is separate from the television and other work paraphernalia like paints. Such rooms are usually equipped with storage space for stacks of folders and boxes.

I have met many creatives without adequate space for separating administrative work from everyday aspects of the home. It appears that these people have the tendency to go to cafés. This is especially the case in Brno where, just as during communism, it is typical to share bedrooms other than with your partner.

There is much evidence of creatives undertaking living and working activities in the same place. However, I have been told that the preferred work activities performed at home are the administrative work, which requires silence and avoiding major distractions. The latter can be largely achieved through spatial and temporal management (see chapter eleven). Moreover, the emphasis on the dwelling for thinking and relaxing activities and as a place to sleep means that putting live spaces close to noisy areas is not desirable. I have spoken to several creatives who moved away from the cafés and pubs of the Northern Quarter because the outside noise made it hard to think or relax. This ethnography will discuss more about noise in later chapters.

Many of my informants tell me that they prefer not to work at home (except for activities that involve relaxing), simply because they do not like the idea of work

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<sup>195</sup> I have even heard of cases in Salford where creatives converted their garden shed into offices.

overtaking their life.

I only found one case where creatives did most of their creative production work at their home. They were musicians living in the converted engine house of Islington Mill (it is known as the Engine House). The house had two floors and a mezzanine: the ground floor was the kitchen and living room, upper floor was a music studio (figure 27) and practice space (figure 28), and the mezzanine was the bedroom.

Because of its location of being surrounded by warehouse and storage industries, and facing away from art studios and residential area the noise created from the upper floor of the Engine House was not too disturbing for residents. Despite the large space, the musicians often spent time in the common space of Islington Mill rather than their own dwelling. Despite the possibility to do so, the creatives chose not to undertake all living and working activities in the same unit.

When the musicians moved to Berlin to find new inspiration, I took over the Engine House with the condition that the manager could explore different uses of the first two floors. However, only the ground floor was experimented on during my stay. It seemed that I had the same tendency of not to use the first floor of the Engine House when I took over the place from the musicians. Looking back at the photographs when my friends and family visited me at Islington Mill, the majority of the photographs were taken in the kitchen, bedroom or around the studio complex; but never on the upper floor. If I worked from home, activities like coding and memoing (see appendix three), I would work either at the mezzanine or at a corner of the kitchen.

Sometimes the decision not to work at home was decided by the people living with creatives. This was particularly so with younger creatives. This was often the case with the young Brno informants who have little private space.<sup>196</sup> In the case of the young Brnoites, it was unlikely that they perform messy tasks like painting at home, nor have space to store equipment. Furthermore, the noise and number of people talking to the creative at home reduced the amount of administrative work performed at home.

Most of my young Manchester informants also shared dwellings; however, they normally had their own room. Therefore, they had more private space than their Brno counterparts and greater choice of where to perform work activities. Most of the time their housemates were friends, and not all of them were creatives or involved with the cultural and creative industry. Some shared a house with creatives and agreed to find a place with an additional room as a shared workspace. The workspace is normally for common storage or office space.

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<sup>196</sup> Many of my young Brno informants shared a bedroom with three or four other people and the only common room was the kitchen.





Figure 27: Sound insulation stuck on to the wall to convert half of the upper floor of Islington Mill's Engine House into recording studio. The insulation foam was very difficult to remove and left marks when peeled off. The owner was not happy and questioned 'why someone would live with this?' Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2009.

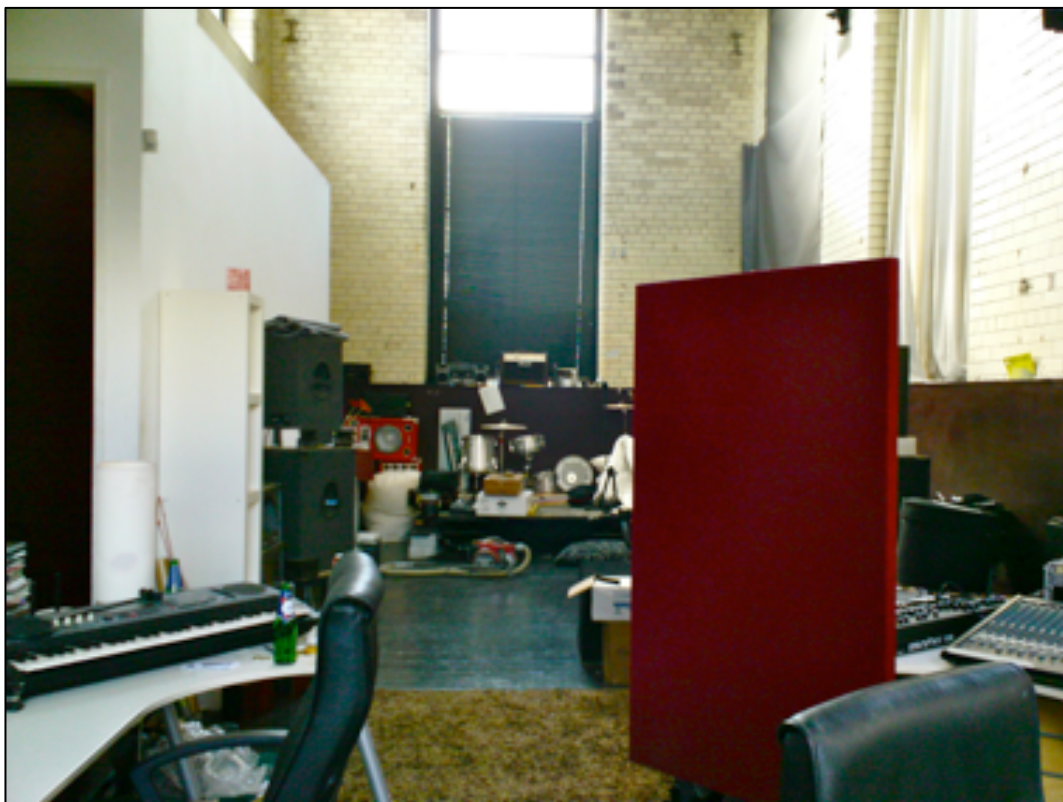


Figure 28: Performance and practice area was at the upper floor of Islington Mill's Engine House. The ceiling was very high, which I felt made an uncomfortable living environment. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2009.



The sharing of a workplace between creatives for thinking activities was observed in both Manchester and Brno. They are normally in the form of a shared office and not clustered in a creative milieu. There are managed workplaces containing individual studio spaces in Manchester, which are different to offices and will be discussed in the following section.

The determining factors for location of these offices are the cost of the rent and the ease of going to different neighbourhoods or cities. I have found these independent offices units in Manchester from enterprise parks to office blocks. The units in Brno were found in a wider range of locations (but not Romany areas): for example, residential blocks, chatas, enterprise parks and working industrial areas. Like dwellings, individual workplaces are spread across Manchester and Brno. However, they seem to cluster around public transport stops. The larger concentrations are often located at transport hubs.<sup>197</sup>

I have noticed that those informants from Brno share offices because of convenience, rather than with the purpose of cooperation. For example, in 2003, a graphic-design collective called Studio Cabinet was set up in a Brno suburb by three people who met at a gaming company. Since then, they moved closer to the city centre because the difference in rent was not too great and that made commuting easier for all. Subsequently, people living in different parts of Brno entered the collective. Over time, each member's practice diverged and each found his or her own clients. They no longer work together, but do ask for advice from each other. In fact, there are many times they do not know where the others are: one day I was at Studio Cabinet and asked where one of them was; they did not know and suggested that he went swimming. I later found out he went to Budapest. There was no landline and thus each member of the group was contacted *via* their personal mobile phones. They told me that they had never worked on a group project and have meetings out of the office because it would disturb other people working. However, other than sharing the cost of rent, the benefits of a shared studio are that there are people on hand to give technical assistance and feedback. This divergence could have been catalysed by the internal layout of the office, figures 29 and 30, where they work away from each other. One has his own room, figure 31, emphasising the statement by a Brno artist that Brno creatives are 'lone wolves'. I have found other cases similar to Studio Cabinet.

The individual workplaces are rarely only for individual work activities. I have seen occasions where the house or office had been used for group activities of a selective nature, such as house parties. Having friends over can also be a bonding activity in order to maintain networks. Nevertheless, the majority of group activities are found outside the house and office.

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<sup>197</sup> This observation was possibly because I cannot drive and could not always get a lift from research assistants or informants.



Figure 29: A Brno creative at the Studio Cabinet's office. The people at the office chose to face the wall and away from those at figure 30. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2008.

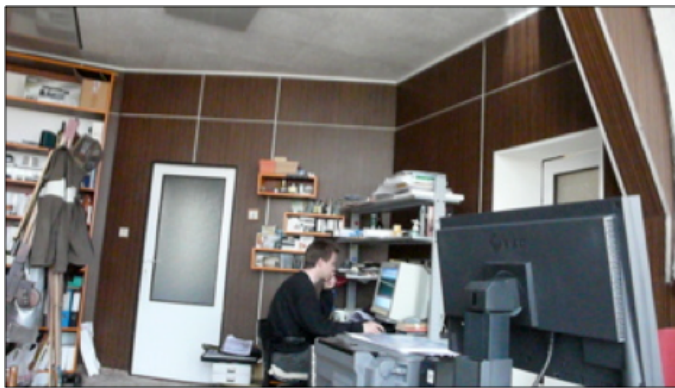


Figure 30: Another Brno creative at Studio Cabinet's office. He also chose to face the wall. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2008.

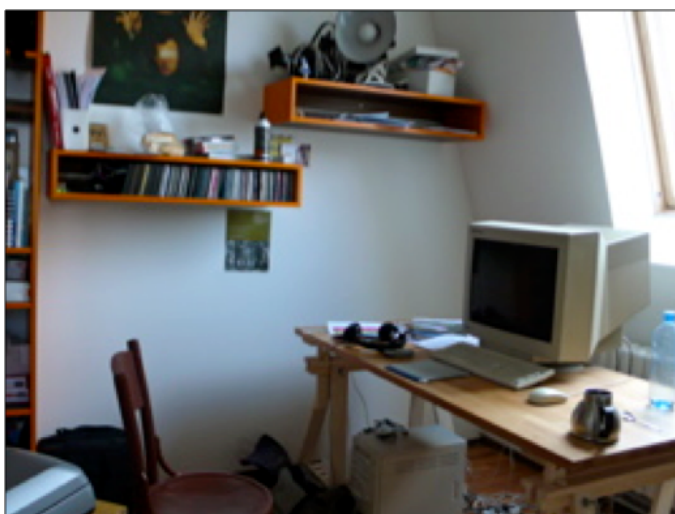


Figure 31: Someone from Studio Cabinet who chose to work at a separate room, away from those in figures 29 and 30. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2008.

### Collective workplace and the playscape

Individuals may have their own workplaces that adapt to a creative's more unusual or specialised work activities. The fieldwork has shown me that there are workplaces used by many creatives at the same time. Figures 32 and 33 maps out these collective workplaces known to me during the Manchester and Brno fieldworks.<sup>198</sup> I have identified collective workplaces as buildings that operate as a mixture of: studio spaces and event venues (what I call semi-private workplaces); public spaces used during the showing phase (see chapter seven); shops; venues; cafés and pubs.

The semi-private workplaces and cafés and pubs will be the focus of this section, as they are identified as important for both creative production and networking – the key themes in this thesis. These places are normally found in what Chatterton & Hollands (2002) call playscapes.

Figure 32 maps 56 collective workplaces I frequently visited during the Manchester fieldwork. I knew of more but it was impossible to visit everywhere and perform the same level of detailed study. I went to the mapped places because I knew several of my informants would be there. Most of these informants were from 'Salford-City Centre West' (SCCW)<sup>199</sup> network in 2009; effectively, I had mapped collective workplaces for members of SCCW in this period. Many local Mancunian creatives informed me that the neighbourhood of Chorlton was identified as an 'artist's village'. Yet, Chorlton is unmarked in figure 33. This was not because creatives from Chorlton spend most of their time in workplaces outside Chorlton, but, rather that most of my informants were not well networked to these creatives, and the snowball sampling method used during my field work did not provide me the opportunity to research further into the district. There was one creative who had networks in Chorlton but it was normal for them to meet in the centre of the city.

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<sup>198</sup> I had not included individual workplaces on both maps, as this would be an encroachment of privacy ethics.

<sup>199</sup> See '*the methodology*' section for a recap on the SCCW scene.

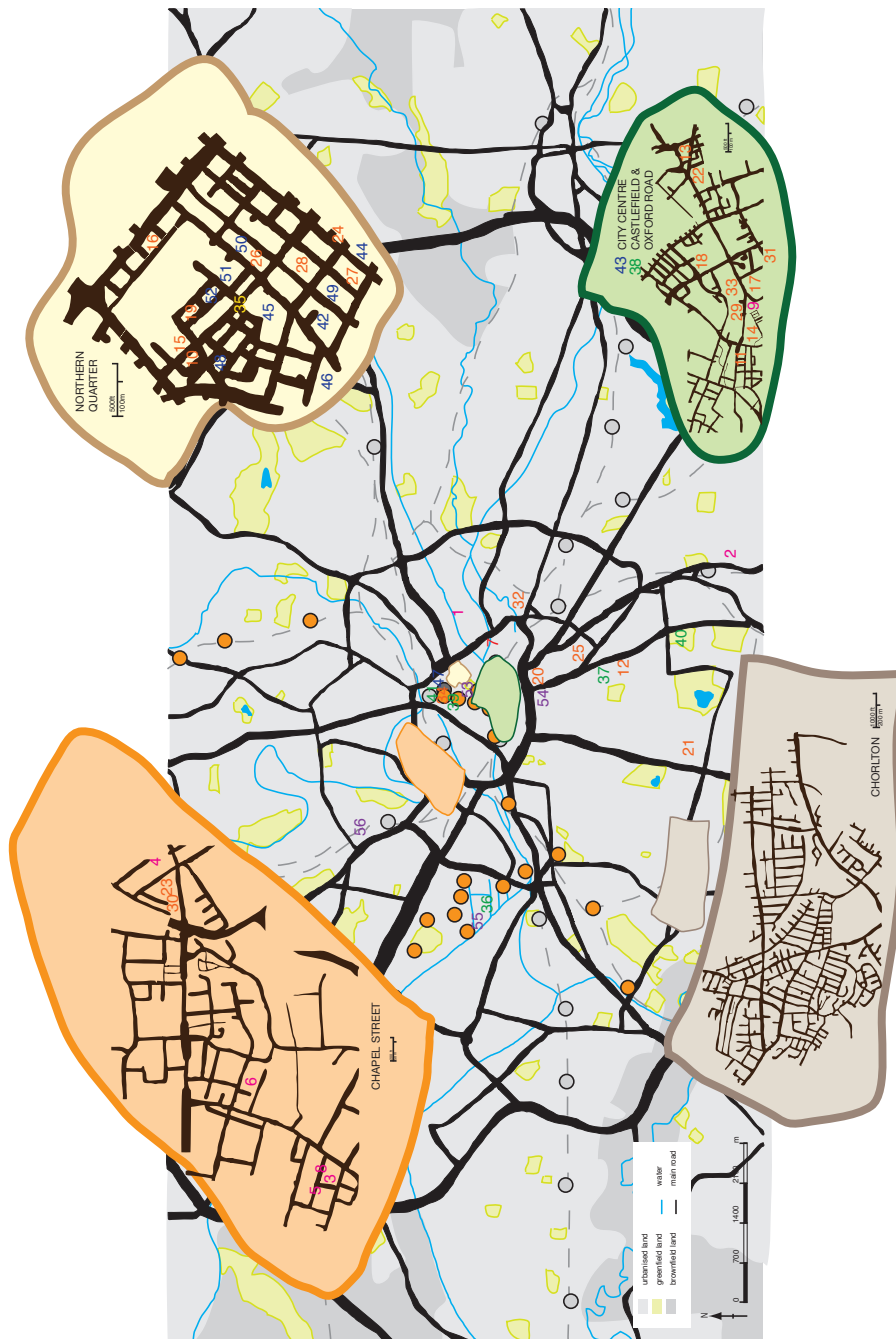


Figure 32: Public access/collective workplaces distribution in Manchester. (1) AWOL Studios; (2) Bankley Studios Gallery; (3) Cow Lane Studios; (4) From Space [shop and studio]; (5) Hot Bed Press Studios; (6) Islington Mill; (7) Rogue Artists Studios; (8) Suite Studio; (9) Ultimate Holding Company [studio] (10); Apotheca [bar] (11); The Cask Inn (12); Big Hands [pub]; (13) The Bulls Head [pub]; (14) Castlefield Gallery; (15) Chinese Art Centre; (16) Common [bar]; (17) Cornerhouse; (18) Cube Gallery; (19) CUP [café]; (20) The Deaf Institute [club]; (21) Folk café; (22) International 3 [gallery]; (23) The Kings Arms; (24) Koffee Pot [café]; (25) Kro Bar; (26) Matt & Phreds Jazz Club; (27) Nexus [café]; (28) The Night and Day Café; (29) Peveril Of The Peak [pub]; (30) The Salford Restoration Office [gallery]; (31) The Salisbury [pub]; (32) Star & Garter [pub]; (33) Temple Of Convenience [pub]; (34) The Triangle empty unit shop; (35) Comme Ca Art [art dealership]; (36) The Lowry; (37) Manchester Academy; (38) Manchester Art Gallery; (39) The Ruby Lounge [club]; (40) Whitworth Art Gallery; (41) URBIS; (42) Afflecks; (43) Generation POP [gallery]; (44) Junk; (45) Manchester Craft and Design Centre; (46) Manchester Markets stalls; (47) Mooch Art Gallery; (48) Oklahoma [café]; (49) Piccadilly Records; (50) Rags to Bitches [shop]; (51) Renegade Marmalade [shop]; (52) Richard Goodall Gallery; (53) Main shopping area; (54) Manchester Metropolitan University; (55) Media City UK; (56) Salford University. Map created by Aaron Mo.

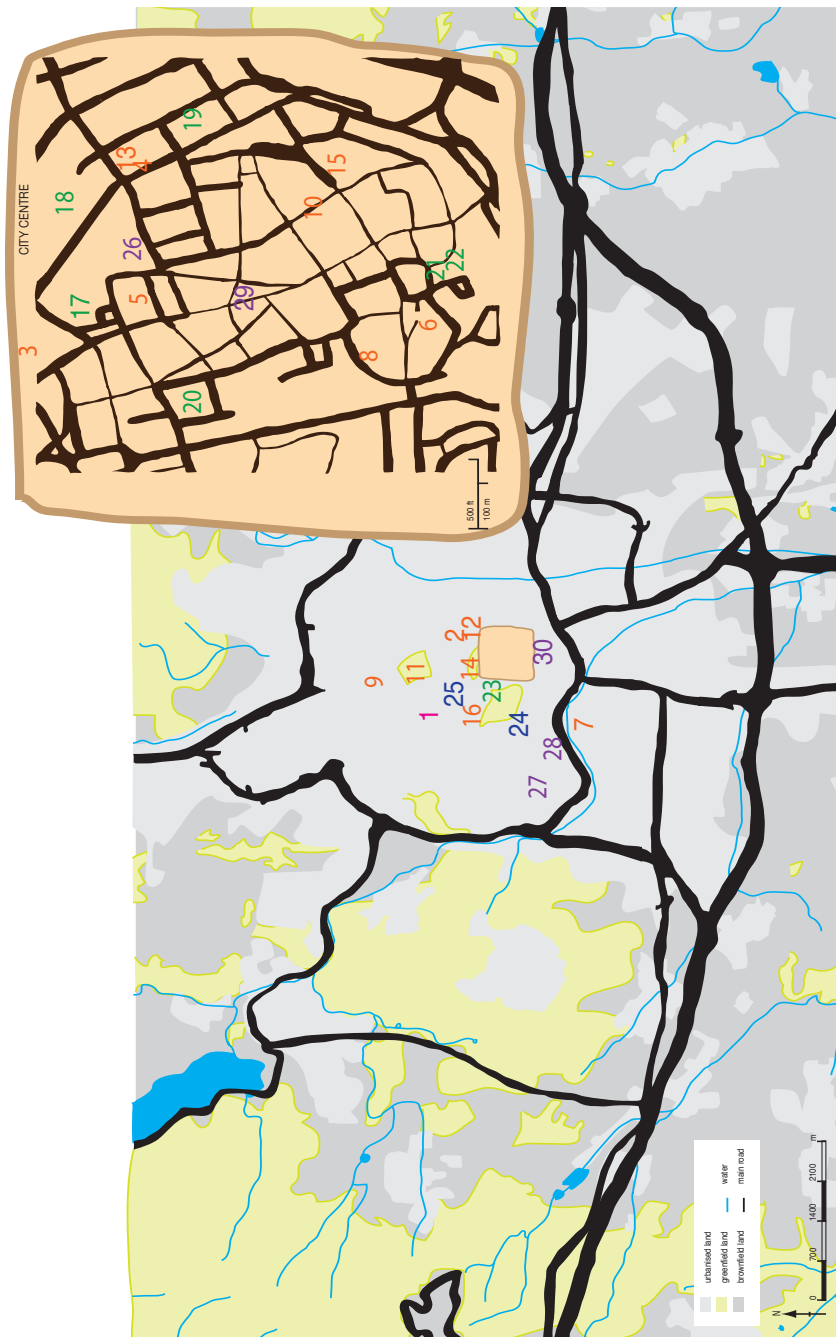


Figure 33: Public access/collective workplaces distribution in Brno. (1) Studio Cabinet [office]; (2) Blues Bar Traubka [pub]; (3) Café Steiner; (4) Desert [club]; (5) Divadlo Bolka Polivky [theatre]; (6) Divadlo Husa na Provázku [theatre]; (7) Duck Bar; (8) Dům pánů z Kunštátu/Kavárna Kunštátská Trojka [gallery/café]; (9) Fléda [pub]; (10) Divadlo/Kavárna Švanda [theatre]; (11) Kino Art [cinema]; (12) Mýdlo [pub]; (13) Perpetuum [club]; (14) Skleněná Louka [pub]; (15) Spolek [café]; (16) U Bláhovky [pub]; (17) Dům umění města [gallery]; (18) Janáčkovovo divadlo [theatre]; (19) Mahenovo divadlo [theatre]; (20) Moravská galerie v Brně [gallery]; (21) Moravská Zemská knihovna [gallery]; (22) Reduta [theatre]; (23) Špilberk castle; (24) Žiži [shop]; (25) Fundus Bazar [shop]; (26) Česká Televize [national broadcasting corporation]; (27) Brněnské výstaviště [exhibition centre]; (28) Vysoké učení technické v Brně [university]; (29) Náměstí Svobody [main square]; (30) Galerie Vaňkovka [shopping centre]. Map created by Aaron Mo.

Figure 33 is a map of the 30 collective/public-access workplaces in Brno. Almost half of the number of places I visited in Manchester. I am almost certain that I have been to all the important places for the majority of Brno creatives (from all subgroups) because these places were frequently mentioned. I rarely heard of new places after four months into the fieldwork.

From the maps, it seems that there is a tendency for these workplaces to cluster. Most of the clusters are especially towards busy railway stations and shopping areas. Their general role seems to be catering for collective activities such as meetings, showing and selling work. However, with closer inspection, these workplaces take different forms, and with it, have different roles.

The first difference that I noticed was two generic types of collective workplaces: one that provides limited public access (semi-private workplaces) and another that are open to the general public (public workplaces). The latter can be split into the following groups: public spaces; shops; galleries, clubs and other venues; and cafés, and pubs.

### **Semi-private workplaces**

During the time of the fieldwork in Manchester, there were twelve 'managed workspaces' as discussed in chapter five. They were complexes of privately rented studio units with common rooms.<sup>200</sup> Studio units are not used as a dwelling, nor do they resemble a living place. For example, very few of these units contain photographs of their family and friends. The public are admitted to the common spaces occasionally, hence I am calling them semi-private workplaces.<sup>201</sup> Islington Mill was the only privately owned semi-private workplace.

At the time of the fieldwork, the Chinese Art Centre and Islington Mill also offered Artist in Residence programmes. Islington Mill also had two spaces for permanent dwelling<sup>202</sup>, one of the spaces is also used as a Bed and Breakfast. Offering these types of residential spaces is not common.

Some academics mentioned in chapter five said that there were no restrictions on the type of businesses allowed in the managed workspaces in Manchester and that this led to an eclectic and ultimately effective mixed environment. This was not entirely true. Since the workplace manager chooses the creatives who reside in a studio unit, they effectively also choose the type of art produced in

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<sup>200</sup> The common room is usually a post room, kitchen, corridor, smoking area and a 'lounge area'.

<sup>201</sup> 'Managed workspaces' are not used because we are concerned with the place, more than the workspace.

<sup>202</sup> These spaces are called the Paramatta and the Engine House.

the place<sup>203</sup> and what activity may not take place.<sup>204</sup> The environment depends on the workplace manager's orientation and taste, producing a specialised environment catering for a particular art form or genre.

The studios are often used for research, some administration, hosting meetings and as storage space. If the goods are small, the creatives also produce their work at the studios. This ethnography will not comment on observations regarding off-site production, as they are too diverse<sup>205</sup> and were not always in the city. The studios may be individually occupied but are connected by close geographical proximity and an internal e-mail system, forming ties<sup>206</sup> and enabling the sharing of information.

However, I would argue that strengthening ties is not easy. When living at Islington Mill and constantly using the common room for its Wi-Fi, few people stopped and had a chat with me, despite knowing who I was. I do not believe it was because I was not a creative. I went to an Open Studio<sup>207</sup> where I overheard a resident talking to another resident, commenting that they had both been residents at the same place for over a year and that day was the first time they had met.

With regard to location, Champion (2010) correctly pointed out that all of these workplaces occupied disused industrial buildings and were mainly located at the 'outer city centre' (however, one was located in Stockport). But Champion (2010) wrongly suggested that they avoided 'risky' areas. When I was living in Islington Mill, my informants and I were exposed to people on the street shouting 'interesting' remarks and showing unfriendly gestures to me, damaging windows and littering drug paraphernalia (figure 34).

It was noted that these workplaces had a regional catchment area. When I went to AWOL studios, I met a fashion company whose owner and designer resided in Blackpool. She was willing to make daily commutes to Manchester because she claimed that there is a better market for fashion in Manchester. They have a couple of shops in Manchester and have a Manchester studio to reduce transport costs of moving stock between the studio and their shops and stalls in Manchester city centre.

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<sup>203</sup> For example, Hot Bed Press (number 5 on figure 32) is mainly for printers, Suite studio (number 8 on figure 32) consisted of those from the plastic art subgroup and Rogue Studios (number 7 on figure 32) was for the fine art subgroup.

<sup>204</sup> For example, Islington Mill does not allow musicians with the purpose to make certain types of music to rent studio space.

<sup>205</sup> I have been to places like recycling plants, occupied spaces and specialised factories.

<sup>206</sup> Normally, by seeing the same faces when entering and leaving the workplace and walking through common rooms.

<sup>207</sup> When the semi-private workplace opens its doors to public for one day, half a day or a weekend, they are allowed to visit people's workspace.





Figure 34: I went to an afternoon event in Manchester city centre and when I came back there was a discarded heroin kit next to Islington Mill. Someone from Islington Mill called the council to dispose of it, but it was not cleaned until two days later. I am not aware of anyone from Islington Mill who takes heroin. One resident suggested it was from a nearby residential block. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009.

I did not find any semi-private workplaces in the Brno fieldwork. However, I did find some places that offered a similar specialised environment as discussed above. For example, a New Media Art environment was created by the group hosting workshops, these venues also offer quiet rooms to work in and storage spaces (if you knew the manager). In the case of New Media Art these workspaces are normally found in Fléda. These places tended not to be found in disused industrial buildings, instead, in smaller building stock of the size of a café or a club.

#### **Public workplaces: cafés and pubs**

Several academics in the literature review highlighted the importance of the café and pubs as workplaces in the cultural and creative industry.<sup>208</sup> Just to recap these places are mainly used both as a way for networking and escaping from their work. At the same time, they have been used for meetings and other

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<sup>208</sup> For example Brown, O'Connor & Cohen, 2000; Cohen, 2007.



work activities. As already suggested towards the end of chapter seven it appears creatives in both Manchester and Brno are drawn to certain types of cafés and pubs, and are repelled from others. I will make a general overview of 'creative-orientated cafés and pubs' and understand the differences between them in Manchester and Brno.

Brno's 'creative-orientated cafés and pubs' are best described as untraditional to Czech Republic in that they normally have bright walls and are further characterised by their wine chillers, imported beers, and lack of table football. In comparison, the walls of the Manchester creative-orientated cafés or pubs that are known to me are dirtier, in that they are often covered with graffiti and posters. In addition, unlike in Brno, many of the people in these places often have a certain look and are dressed in a certain way.<sup>209</sup>

The café and pub cultural environments between the two cities are different. First, Brno cafés are smokier because only Manchester had a smoking ban during the fieldworks. Secondly, most Manchester café and pubs had a counter service, while Brno mostly used waiter and waitress service.

In terms of similarities, creative-orientated cafés and pubs in both cities offer board games, newspapers, and book exchanges, all of which increases the probability of clients staying longer and meeting people. Also, most of these places exhibit work or hold performances and are littered with flyers, posters and reading material.

These places provide opportunities to show off work, meet people from your networks and form networks, exchange information, and maintain trust. This is certainly true for Brno cafés and pubs where there is free Wi-Fi and plenty of power sockets for laptops, especially as many Brno creatives work (i.e., do their administrative work) outside their living space. Moreover, such places are particularly useful for New Media Artists because the electronic media they work with is mobile and can be shared. This suggests the reason that most of my meetings were arranged in such public workplaces.

CUP in Manchester and Spolek in Brno were the most common cafés people mentioned as places they tended to hold meetings. They are both in the city centre and are well known by almost all creatives from all creative tribes in their respective city. Not all creative-orientated cafés and pubs are found at the city centre. Some have a localised importance; for example, there is a Stockport café that is popular with creatives living in Stockport.

Despite the need to save money, many creatives are willing to spend money in

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<sup>209</sup> The word 'hipster' would be best to describe the look. However, calling the majority of my informants as hipster would be very unfair because most of those I know do not aim to look like a hipster.

cafés and pubs, as they are good locations for a variety of valuable activities mentioned in chapters three and seven, such as: holding meetings, exchanging values, hypersocialise, thinking, administration and research. But it is important to note that no one workplace can benefit all the creative activities in equal measure. For example, although it is possible to hold a concert in any public space, café or even shop, a dedicated concert venue would benefit from: capacity, acoustics and infrastructure such as fixed large mixing desk and stage.

### **The impact of virtual technology as a workplace**

Whittel (2001) suggest that virtual communication is important for the cultural and creative industries. I observed the majority of my informants in Manchester and Brno own laptops and are active on the Internet – for example many people speak about using social network sites and information gathered through the World Wide Web – and use the phone and postal service. I noticed that it is the Internet that is most commonly used to connect creatives to other creatives and others. The platforms used include: auctioning sites, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), social network sites, peer-to-peer music streaming services, mailing lists, e-mails, messaging services, and forums. Many of the creatives I met mentioned that they used at least three of these platforms regularly. They are mainly used as a way to promote themselves, gain information and a networking aid that goes beyond geographical boundaries, and as a way to lower cost barriers to reaching more people. This is especially so with musicians, New Media Artists and most art genres<sup>210</sup>.

The Internet offers many ways for creatives to promote themselves. Many people at the time of the fieldwork mark their presence and sell their work through a website. There are some who engage more: a Brno VJ is a heavy user of various social network sites and virtual platforms, constantly writing and blogging on topics relating to his interests and actions. He links all these activities, interests and contributions, and, in the process, builds up a following. This constant activity of self-promotion prompts voluntary contributions by readers, which leads to a snowballing of information. Since the fieldworks, I have noticed that my informants are now also active in Twitter and Facebook as a means to promote themselves and as a way to accumulate more information.

Finding ideas and information is less of an obstacle now. This is because there is more instant information on the Internet, search engines are becoming more sophisticated, and Google Translate lessens the language barriers. According to a Manchester cultural gatekeeper, post-2000 technological improvements and the increased use of the Internet mean that distribution of information is

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<sup>210</sup> Some fine artists scan and send images.

now easier. Previously they had to hang around public workplaces and choose who they will distribute advertising material to, according to how they dress and what they buy. This required heavy human resources.

From my experience, I found the Brnoites more aloof than my Mancunian informants during initial meetings. Many of my Brno informants did not drink alcohol with me during our first couple of meetings and it was harder to join a conversation as the discussions often referred to friends of friends. To develop friendship, it was important to understand the group and find a way to integrate yourself in the dynamics. I heard from my Slavic friends who had studied in the Czech Republic that it was even common for them to have difficulty joining a group of Czech friends; they could only manage to join in on conversations on their third or fourth time of drinking with them. Once you are part of the group, you are accepted into a strongly bonded group, even if everyone is living in other cities (they connect with each other *via* the Internet, especially Skype).

The seemingly tight friendship bond in Czech society appears to create some face-to-face barriers when attempting to integrate into an established network. I have met a Slovakian New Media Artist overcoming this by using the NMA forum [nyx.cz](http://nyx.cz). Virtually all the participants of the forum communicate in Czech or Slovak (therefore, language excluded the participation of many foreigners). After several posts and discussions on the forum, she was able to arrange some meetings with other local NMA members and discuss making collaborations. Here the Internet, or network sociality, was seen as a more efficient way than face-to-face encounters to acquaint and gain trust with a network. However, meetings were necessary if networks were to work together.

I have observed the Internet is used as a way to attend events, with the aim to meet their networks or form new ones. My informants use listing guides on the Internet (like The Art Guide) or forums (like [nyx.cz](http://nyx.cz)). It seems that going to events tends to be the preferred way of initiating face-to-face encounters with potential networks. I found acquainting with networks in Manchester more effective by face-to-face encounters; rather than through network sociality. From my own experience of living in England and using the Internet in English, I suspect that there is so much information in English that I found I have started to filter information by ignoring or skimming posts. Here a large choice of potential networks is a barrier. Meeting people face-to-face does not only communicate a person's idea or interest, but also builds or forms a personality. It seems that personality is a factor influencing how many of my informants and I<sup>211</sup> choose to work with someone, i.e., an added filter to making a new network or collaboration. As Storper & Venables (2004) suggested, the relevance of these virtual tools is limited when developing a working relationship.

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<sup>211</sup> Hence, how I chose my research assistants.

By observing my informants, face-to-face encounters may seem to be the preferred way of making new networks; however, the Internet seems to be useful for maintaining contacts (and potentially leading collaborations). Maintaining the strength of friendship is made easier by the increasing accessibility of virtual communications through social network websites, e-mails and forums using the Internet, laptops and smartphones. They increase information loops that are needed to sustain trust-based relationships and reduce the impact of the physical distance on knowledge exchanges. This is especially the case for Brno's New Media Artists who are less affected by distance because most of their material and work can be stored and transferred digitally.

Analysis of virtual communications often concentrates on its application. What is often missed out is how the appliances are used itself, such as the shell of the laptops or the programs on their smartphones. I have seen some creatives aged 30s and below placing their company's logo/motif and website onto the back of their laptop; thus, using the laptop as an *ad hoc* advertising board.

Very few Brno informants owned smartphones during the 2008 – 2009 fieldwork. However, I noticed at the time that there were a few in Manchester who owned iPhones. When I first met them they used it as a way of storing my contact details and showing me their music or work archive. Storing work on a portable device is useful for showing and reflecting activities. Figure 16 is a picture of a plastic artist showing me a portfolio of her work on iPhone. I had a Manchester musician who played me their music on their iPhone. After showing me their work, both informants asked for my opinion of their work. Meeting people and showing their work was a good way in gaining feedback. In this case, the feedback was something that they probably would not have had if I did not see their work with them.

Virtual technology seems to be very important for maintaining contacts and obtaining or sharing vast amounts of information in both Manchester and Brno. However, the modern, mobile appliances are also useful as a way of showing and reflecting activities during face-to-face encounters. It has been observed that my informants are prepared to spend money on achieving physical meetings.

#### **Network of collective workplaces: scenes**

One of the crucial themes this doctorate focuses on is; the spaces, venues and mobility of the cultural and creative industries in second order cities. With this in mind, it is important to look at how creatives associate with a workplace, and how workplaces are linked within and outside Manchester and Brno.

I often saw the same faces in a collective workplace. Whenever an informant

directed me to another place, it tended to be similar to the workplace where I had met that informant. Furthermore, there had been times when I noticed the same people at the two workplaces. As Burke (2000) noted “access to knowledge is path dependent and is provided by systems of production, coercion and cognition” (p. 7). It seems that people and creatives who have similar tastes and cognitive direction towards a genre and creative subgroup have a tendency to group between certain collective workplaces. Certain paths are created, directing flows amongst these workplaces, or ‘scapes’ and ‘diaspora space’ (Appadurai, 1996; Brah, 1996). This is what Currid (2007) would name as a ‘scene’.

Yet, there are times when there are hints of the scene’s urban spatial practices, normally in the form of how people look and dress when going to or leaving an event, or when leaving ‘street art’. Take the anonymity of Fléda at street level (figure 35).

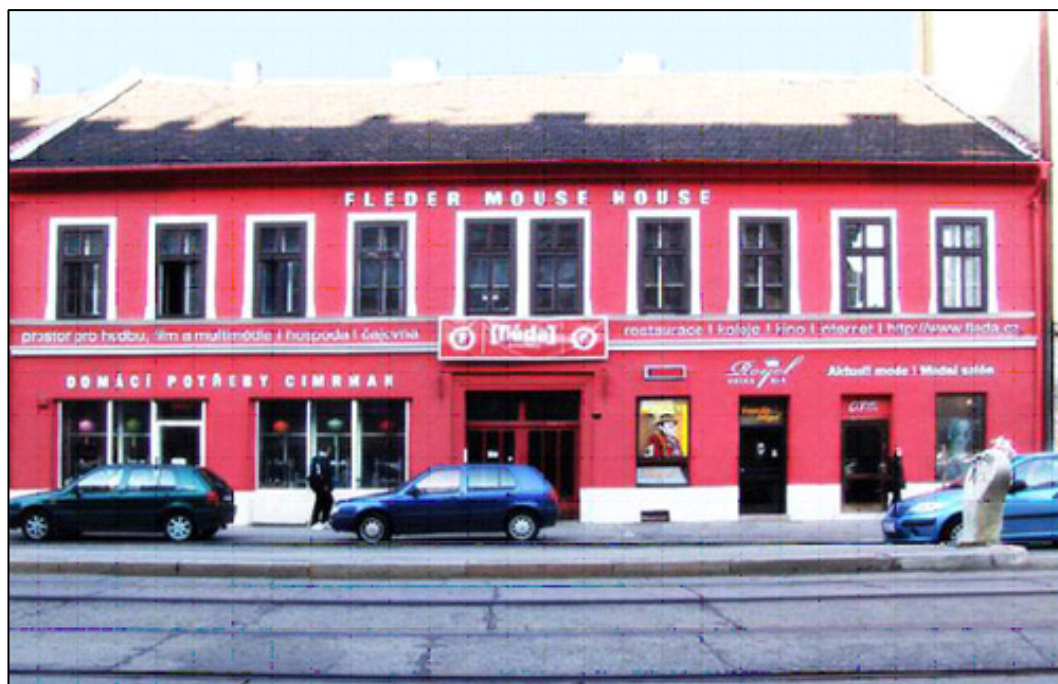


Figure 35: Fléda is regarded locally as the hub for New Media Art in Brno. From looking at the façade, there is no obvious indication of its cultural importance or differentiation from other clubs. Photograph source: Hlody.cz.

It was noticeable in Manchester that collective workplaces had their own networks. By basing most of my Manchester fieldwork in Islington Mill, this allowed me to observe the owner’s own network with other workplaces. He seemed to be well networked but the strongest networks seemed to be with the Chinese Art Centre and Castlefield Gallery. Workers of these two workplaces

tended to be recurrent faces at meetings and events. The particular strength of the link between the managers had its benefits such as pooling and exchanging resources. Figures 36 to 39 show Islington Mill borrowing chairs from Castlefield Gallery for a dinner incentive to bring creatives and nuclear physicists together, in order to mix artists with scientists. Castlefield Gallery also had the tendency to promote the Chinese Art Centre and Islington Mill before the start of a talk (figure 38).

There are times when individual creatives may explore new scenes and test new places, however, it seems to be often the case that they are most comfortable amongst a community made up of similar cognitive distances and associate themselves with a scene, each of which have their own preferred set of collective workplaces and events. Members of a scene rarely venture to collective workplaces and events unrelated to their scene – even though previous chapters suggest the benefits of working in environments new to them. This was evident during my stay in Islington Mill where I did not meet anyone from the advertising firms at Chapel Street that Champion (2010) spoke off and I do not know the venue of the ‘The Loop’ club night that Gu (2010) pointed out as the most famous networking event in Manchester.<sup>212</sup>

As with the punk and electroclash scenes in London and New York mentioned in the literature review, similar trends and fashions can go beyond a city border. Many travel outside their city for an event based on a particular scene. Take, for instance, the SCCW, which is loosely based on the DIY scene.<sup>213</sup> The scene is popular in Leeds; I have met people from Leeds at Islington Mill whenever they hold a DIY event.

I have noticed that Brno’s NMA creatives have a more widespread hub-to-hub connection the those studied in Manchester: members of NMA had frequently informed me performing creative activities at hubs outside the city, while their Manchester counterparts tend to mention hubs within the city when talking about work. As I hinted earlier in the ethnography discussion, it was difficult to arrange meetings with my Brno informants because they are often away making collaborations with people in other cities or attending other NMA events in other cities. Just as with the Devětsil and Czechoslovak New Wave movements I mentioned in chapter five, Czech creatives join groups that are not confined to a city. This higher degree of mobility is an interesting difference in the use of geography between Brno and Manchester.

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<sup>212</sup> I am assuming it is a famous event for the fashion subgroup as these were the people Gu mainly reported on in her 2010 study.

<sup>213</sup> The DIY scene is based on an ethic that is “tied to punk ideology and anticonsumerism, as a rejection of the need to purchase items or use existing systems or processes that would foster dependence on established societal structures. According to the punk aesthetic, one can express oneself and produce moving and serious works with limited means” (Byrne & Deller, 2010).



Figure 36: A part of Islington Mill called the Paramata. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.



Figure 37: A picture of people talking to each other in Castlefield gallery before the talk commenced. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.





Figure 38: Information about a forthcoming event at the Chinese Art Centre, in a Castlefield Gallery event in figure 37. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.



Figure 39: A dinner event at the Paramata. Islington Mill had plenty of tables but had to borrow the chairs from Castlefield gallery (note the same shape of the metal rail). Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009.



It seems that my Manchester study highlighted much less cross-border collaboration. Yet, they do exist. For example, Islington Mill has good links to public workplaces in Berlin. Navigating a Manchester art scene may be harder than it seems. Not just because of the use of atypical spaces and places, but because individual and workplace networks are not bound by city borders.

This chapter on workplaces highlighted creatives' preference to separate creative activities with different spaces and, if possible, places. Also noted was the importance of collective workplaces for group activities of likeminded people. Collective workplaces are part of a scene and shared resources. Since creatives tend to stick with a scene and there is an apparent tight network of collective workplaces, the possibility of creatives meeting different kinds of people is limited, and consequently does not expand existing pools of resources.

## Chapter 10: Events and after-events at workplaces

One of the objectives of this thesis is to discover the mechanism that brings creatives together. Once the mechanism is working and creatives are gathered, this will enable the group activity of networking and then the flow of information, thereby forming the backbone to the cultural and creative industries.

The previous chapter has hinted that some activities that create events, like dinner parties and talks, have the ability to bring people together. This chapter will investigate further into the events, so that we can understand how they can be used as tools to enable networking activities.

### Events

	Collective workplace	individual workplace
Public events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art gallery previews</li> <li>• Open mic nights</li> <li>• Open studios</li> <li>• Talks</li> <li>• Book clubs</li> <li>• Performances/shows</li> <li>• Festivals</li> <li>• Clubbing</li> <li>• 'After Party'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite only previews, dinners, meetings etc.</li> </ul>
Private events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drinks in a pub</li> <li>• Meeting in a café</li> <li>• Celebrations</li> <li>• After-event get-together</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House parties</li> <li>• Diner parties</li> <li>• Celebrations</li> <li>• Open studios</li> <li>• After-event get-together</li> </ul>

Figure 40: A matrix showing the different types of events that I attended during the fieldwork. Matrix created by Aaron Mo.

Events aid play activities. As discussed in chapter nine, people gather where there are play activities and perform them with friends. These people need not be creatives. Events 'honeypot' (i.e. brings together) a mixture of people thus have the potential to elicit new networks and flows of information.

Creative-orientated events come in different forms. Figure 40 is a matrix showing that events could be open to the public or a private matter, and may occur in collective or individual workplaces. Public events are mostly used for showing activities, while private events are primarily designed for networking, bonding and passing information. Of course, this distinction is not absolute as there is always a certain mixture of public and private aspects present in all these events. Both types of events normally directly or indirectly involve food and drink.<sup>214</sup>

I have been to a few private events in Manchester and Brno. It is easier to engage in conversation at private events than public events because most people know each other, and if not, people are introduced to everyone at the beginning of the event. In addition, people have a tendency to talk to someone in a smaller group. It is possible to pass vast amounts of information. For example, I learnt a lot about gardening because the person sitting next to me was a passionate gardener.

Sometimes, events are so important that people adjust their working week (even month) around them. Normally, it is because of a unique showing or networking opportunity. A notable example is the Manchester International Festival where a couple of informants stopped working on their own projects and volunteered to work at the festival, so as to have a chance to meet the artist Jeremy Deller, those associated with him and cultural gatekeepers who do not normally come to Manchester.

Most events are normally organised at times and days when they potentially can gather a large group of people. This is why most of the events that I attended were during the weekend and in the evening.

There was a decline of events in Brno while I was there, more than in Manchester; some venues even stopped running events during the holidays. A workplace manager told me that it is because most of the university students and many creatives<sup>215</sup> leave the city for the holidays.

A preview is the evening before a new art exhibition is officially opened. This is normally an invitee-only affair in London, but they are open to the public in Manchester and Brno. This is the main social event for the fine and plastic subgroup. In Manchester, they are often organised on Thursdays. I attended previews on Fridays and found that they normally were not well attended; several workplace managers and creatives, who are married or with children, told me that the weekends are saved for 'family and friends'. In this case, they only consider their peers as co-workers and previews for them may be just

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<sup>214</sup> 'Directly' meaning that food and drink are provided on the premise of the event.' Indirectly' meaning that groups of people may organise themselves to meet up before or after the event.

<sup>215</sup> See chapter eight.

social occasions but their primary activity seems to be networking, not socialising.

I have noticed that the majority of my creative and non-creative informants keep a diary of events and look at event listings every week: I have seen Manchester informants circling specific events they wished to attend. One Manchester informant normally buys *The Times* newspaper and *The Guardian* on Saturday. He told me that he buys the *Guardian* because of *The Guardian Guide*. A cultural gatekeeper told me that he also uses *The Guardian Guide* as a way to seek new talent.

Kult is the Brno equivalent of *The Guardian Guide* but its coverage of Brno events is limited. I discovered during the Brno fieldwork that most people learn of events through word-of-mouth or by being on one specific socialite's mailing list (it was written in Czech). I met her from an informant a third of the way into my Brno fieldwork. She was the best gatekeeper I knew in Brno. Equally, one Manchester socialite was my best informant. Since my fieldwork, I have noticed that social network sites, particularly Facebook (which has the advantage of setting alternative language options), are also used to inform readers of various upcoming events. In 2011, I noticed that there were event pages that were set up by socialites or workplace managers that I had met in both of the case study cities.

The problem is that not all events are listed in such guides, or receive recommendation from socialites and not everyone uses these resources to find events. There are other cases where events are by invitation only. I was invited to one event in Brno, which had an exclusive room for invited VIPs.

People can also self-exclude themselves from events. For example, my middle-aged Czech language teacher is an opera fan and for an unknown reason wanted to attend a slam poetry<sup>216</sup> event with me in Fléda. She did not enjoy the event and since then she did not go to any other event in Fléda with me. McRobbie (2011) is correct in saying that events can be exclusive of certain people.

Exclusivity of an event can also come from the ambiguity of the venue. For example, those who do not know the location of someone's house will not be able to go to his house party. This may be useful for private events. However, if a place hosting a public event is not well known and difficult to find, few people will come, meaning few people will see the creative product and fewer people to network. This may be obvious; nevertheless, I have seen public events hosted in unfamiliar places several times in Manchester and one time in Brno. We will compare those that took place in Manchester. Some were successful in

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<sup>216</sup> Slam poetry is an aggressive reading of poetry with music in the background. These events are normally attended by people who enjoy hip-hop and in their 20s.

attracting people, while others were not.

The most unsuccessful public events that I know of were organised by a group of curators, called Outlet. They were constantly changing locations because they had an agreement with the developers Urban Splash to hold previews at their vacant ground-floor units. Most of these buildings were located in anonymous and quiet places that were away from the city centre or 5-10 minutes' walk from the nearest bus stop and were not well signposted.

A very successful event was also a temporary preview held at a vacant ground-floor unit. The only difference is that the unit was in Will Alsop's well-known Chips building, the New Islington regeneration area. Many of my informants told me that they liked the idea of spending an afternoon in this building. It appeared most of the attendees knew each other and were already well networked with each other, making it an exclusive event.

The previews in these first two case studies that are found in places with low footfall and required the potential attendees to prepare (i.e., find and locate the venue on a map) before going to the event.

Another location with well-attended previews was located at an empty unit at The Triangle shopping centre. The space was managed by the shopping centre and invited curators from all over Greater Manchester to exhibit their work; I saw previews from Manchester School of Art (at Manchester Metropolitan University), a self-taught artist from Burnley, and a group from the village of Bramhall. Some people knew the artists or curators, however, because of its location there were many people with shopping bags looking at the artwork; I saw some of them talking to the artist and taking business cards. Here the creatives benefit from higher level of exposure to the general public and have a chance of networking with many types of people.

It seems that well-attended public events should be well signposted, located at the city centre or near public transport hubs.

Events not only can be exclusive but also reinforce cultural tribalism of subgroups and/or genres. None of my informants from SCCW attended the fashion event at the Northern Quarter called 'Sunday Swapsies', nor the series of citywide gallery events called 'Art Crawl, Manchester' set up by Manchester Metropolitan art students. Of those who knew about the events, some informants told me that they did not like the sound of the event; however, the most common response was that they did not know anyone going to the events.

Some authors in the literature review have spoken of the synergy of creative subgroups through shared taste in music and cognitive direction – such as 'indie' (Hracs, Grant, Haggett & Morton, 2011). Music provides the backdrop of scenes and an identity of a creative market to both creatives and outsiders. People, music, or creative products could make this sonic backdrop. It can

cause geographical separation of tastes. London is a good example of geographical stratification of scenes. Indie music lovers are found hanging around Camden, Dubstep is located in Croydon, and Electroclash is immortalised in Shoreditch. This was true to an extent in Manchester in that the Madchester/Baggy/Britpop scene is immortalised in the Northern Quarter. The Manchester band, Delphic, said in an interview with the NME that, “[...] There’s another side to Manchester, and we feel much more part of it” (Doran, 2010). They live in Castlefield, which is closer to the SCCW and, hence, tried not to go to the Northern Quarter. Although as we have found out earlier in this ethnographic report, the stratification is not always possible because of the concentration of cafés, bars and shops (i.e., the local creative market) in the area; therefore, distinct cultural districts in Manchester are not as obvious as in London. There are no obvious cultural districts in Brno, possibly due to the difficulty of identifying something that resembles a local creative market.

Certain types of public events tend to happen in certain public workplaces. The type of event depends on the workplace manager, particularly his or her taste and cognitive direction. Not everyone can be attracted to one type of event, scene or cultural district. If an event or venue is widely known and inviting to the general public, it has also the potential of attracting people of the same cognitive orientation to visit from other cities. I have met people who came to Manchester or Brno just for gigs, exhibitions or other events. Likewise, I have heard informants going to other cities for the same reason.

I have noted that Manchester is particularly important for creatives around the North West region of England as a place to show their work. For example, I have been to two events curated by Blackburn Museum and hosted in Castlefield Gallery, and, a Sheffield art group held their annual show at Manchester’s Bankley House Studios. The majority of events that I had been to in Brno were from the city or were retrospectives. In fact, some of my Brno informants bragged that events, like their solo show, are only shown in Prague or abroad.

Going to an event should be an opportunity to network and exchange information. However, people on their own turf tend to huddle together; outsiders have no option but to socialise amongst themselves. We have mentioned previously that cultural gatekeepers avoid workplaces as a way of escaping from the potential of meeting new creatives. The same could be said for creatives. I noticed when Sheffield creatives came to Bankley House Studios, the residents of the studio complex huddled in a small group of friends. Having new groups of people in a workplace should be seen as a way of expanding a network or accumulating more knowledge, and, yet, there seems to be complacency in hypersocialisation. Any attempt of hypersocialising between the Sheffield and Manchester creatives originated from Manchester socialites and Sheffield creatives. I must admit towards the end of both

fieldworks, I, too, became complacent in talking to new people. I noticed the same people in the same huddle at similar events and venues. By the last month of both fieldwork periods, I was only concentrating on strengthening the ties of my own network of informants and walked into the same huddles. I have only been to events outside the city with Brno informants. I have seen that my companions were hypersocialising more than they would do in Brno; just as the Sheffield creatives did in Manchester. We have seen tribalism and exclusivity as a barrier to these activities. There was another barrier observed in both case studies: socialisation fatigue.

I observed that socialites (mentioned in chapter six) were a good tool to overcoming barriers to networking, mentioned above. Take me as an example. By the end of both fieldworks, I had socialisation fatigue and did not want to meet new people in an event and go through the tiresome introduction process. At those times, instead of hunting round for new creatives, I met new people through informants that were socialites. If they saw me walking by myself and introduced me to someone he or she was talking to at the time. Normally, he or she introduced me to someone and said something about why we should be interested in each other. Once a conversation started, he or she normally moved away and spoke to someone else.

I observed that the creatives and socialites in Brno had a greater tendency to go to events outside the city more than their British counterparts did during the field studies. There are two possible explanations. First, there seemed to be fewer public events in Brno. Secondly, it was relatively cheap for Brnoites to go to events in other cities, especially in Prague, as all of my informants from Brno would sleep on a friend's, or friend of a friend's, floor (I myself have been offered to stay on people's floors in Prague) or come back to Brno on the same night. I caught many Prague-Brno coaches between four and five in the morning. It seems that many of my informants from Manchester (and Sheffield) found it more troublesome to stay on someone's floor<sup>217</sup> and many of my informants were not in favour of travelling to another city just for an event. Unless it was a major event, that will only happen in London.

### **After-events**

Public events may promote honeypotting of people, thus are potential hubs for networking and exchanging information. However, it is possible to be complacent in undertaking such activities because of what I call 'socialisation fatigue' and the limited number of socialites prompting interaction with new people.

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<sup>217</sup> For example, I do not have room to host someone in my place in London. I also have problems finding friends who can host people on my behalf.

A private event, on the other hand, has a tendency to prompt people to talk to new people, even without the help of a socialite. However, these events often consist of a tight group, sometimes with people of weaker ties.

I have seen during the fieldwork (and throughout my life) how someone goes to a public event, meets other people before or at the event and then goes somewhere else together, like a pub or restaurant, after the event. The initial group of people honeypotting to a public event break off into smaller groups of people who have some ties with each other, in a similar way to private events. These are what I call 'after-events'.

I detected the importance of these after-events in Manchester; my knowledge of them in Brno is limited. I have been told by an informant (*via* text message<sup>218</sup>) that they do exist, mostly at people's homes and sometimes in a café (if housemates are not in favour of an after-event). On reflection, I have been to one house after a preview, but I found it was often difficult to position myself in a way that I would be invited to the after-event.

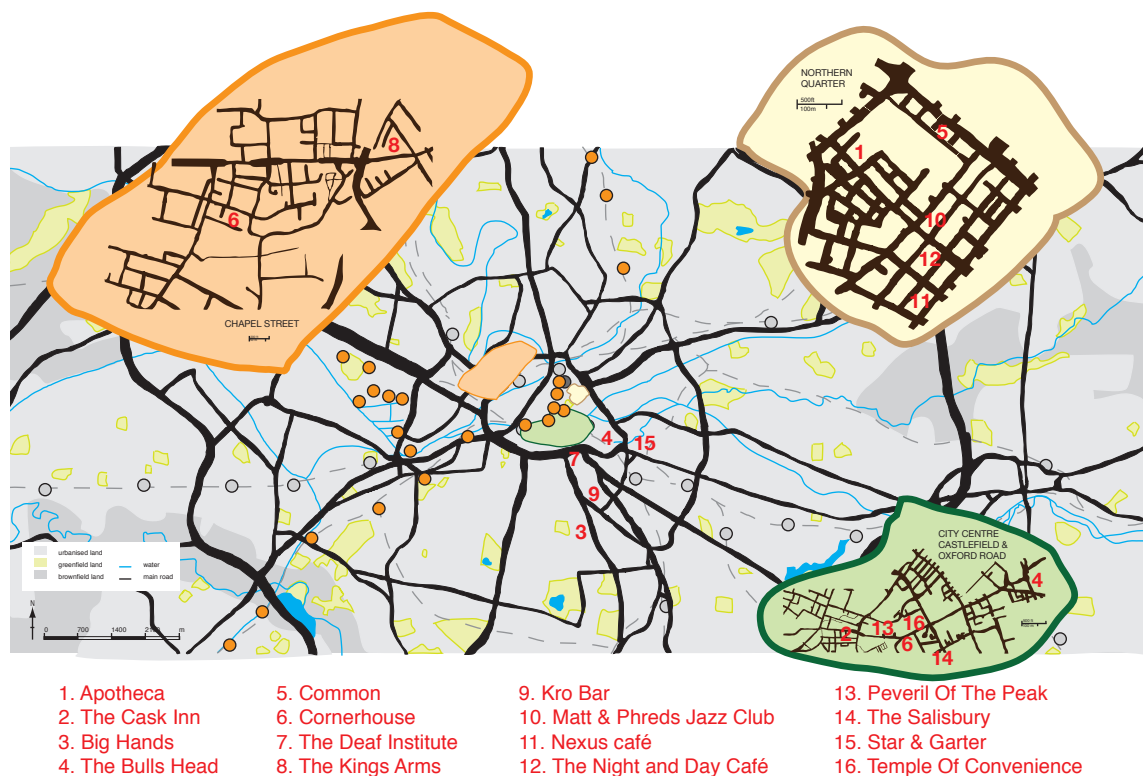


Figure 41: My Manchester informants' typical after-events (N.B. the map does not include eating venues or location of house parties). Map created by Aaron Mo.

<sup>218</sup> I would have e-mailed her, but I was in an after-event in Manchester at the time when their importance struck me.



From what I have seen in Manchester, certain places are commonly used as after-event venues. Figure 41 shows the most common after-event drinks venues that I have been to with my informants during the Manchester fieldwork. Some people do go for dinner or have drinks at someone's home, but it seems that it was more common to go to a pub or bar. I have been to some events away from the city centre; yet, the after-event party seemed to be usually held in a place in the centre.

I never initiated or recommended a place for an after-event. However, I eventually found several ways to be invited to one after consulting some of my informants.

The most common way is the organic approach. An example could be seen in Movie 1 (figure 42); the footage was taken from a preview at the International 3 gallery. It shows people were walking around, looking around for people they know and at times looking at the artwork. Towards the end of the preview people talk to those whom they have ties with about going somewhere else and then carry on conversations. It appears that most people at the event went to The Bulls Head pub, which is next door to the venue. This is the unofficial part of the event. Movie 2 (figure 43) is taken at the after-event in the Bulls Head pub. It is much more relaxed because the introductions had already been made, and that most people have drunk some alcohol and are sitting or standing around with people they know. Since many of the people attending the after-event are often made up of strong social ties; I have seen people talking to people in various tables and joining different huddles. This was different to events, where people tended to socialise in one huddle. The Bulls Head pub seemed to be louder in noise level than at the International 3 gallery. As regards to networking, the event is almost like a preparation for the after-event.



Figure 42: Screenshot of Movie 1 – A few people looking at the artwork at a preview at International 3, Manchester. Video still by Aaron Mo, June 2009.



Figure 43: Screenshot of Movie 2 – After-event drinks in the Bulls Head, Manchester. Video still by Aaron Mo, June 2009.



Figure 44: Food and drinking venues in the Castlefield and Chapel Street areas. The grey arc on the map showing the Castlefield area illustrates that the Cask Inn pub (the pub normally used for Castlefield Gallery after-events) is not the nearest food and drink venue to Castlefield Gallery. Map created by Aaron Mo.

I have been to different events in the same venues and it seems that many of these venues are informally or ritually associated with an after-event venue; just like International 3 and the Bulls Head. The two venues need not be situated next to each other, nor be the closest pub or bar to the event venue. Figure 44

illustrates the after-event venues of events in Castlefield Gallery and Islington Mill. Most attendees of events at Castlefield Gallery often end up at The Cask Inn, instead of the other nine eating and drinking places within the same radius. There was one time I waited at the Deansgate area to see if any of the attendees of an event at Castlefield Gallery would go in that direction. Of the very few people did go that way, none stopped at any of the bars in that area. I was told that many of these pubs were tried and tested at one point; the general consensus (and normally after a cultural gatekeeper's approval) from hearsay was that most people agreed that The Cask Inn was the preferred after-event venue in the area. It then became a habitual place to head for after-events at Castlefield Gallery. Nevertheless, since revisiting Manchester, new pubs and bars have opened. It is possible that one of them could become a more popular after-event venue than The Cask Inn.

Since Islington Mill had a late licence, there were times when it was used as an after-event venue for attendees of Kings Arms events. The link was formed because of the relatively close proximity between the two venues, in terms of geography and cognition, and the strong relations between the workplace manager and socialites associated with both venues.

Some venues have a more formal approach where they cooperate with a nearby bar and hand out drinks vouchers. I was handed out a drink token for a bar called Apotheca (figure 45), which was across the road from the Chinese Art Centre. I was having a fairly long conversation with a worker (he was also a photographer) at the venue. I think the conversation was extended because we were both British Born Chinese (colloquially known by Hong Kong natives as BBC). He decided to carry on the discussion as the preview was closing so he asked a colleague to give me a token. Just as when Gu (2010) spoke of Mancunian fashion designers in London Fashion Week building a relationship on the back of their Manchester roots, as disclosed in her paper, my heritage was also a bonding factor, which got me into an after-party. A person's heritage can have an impact on forming some networks easier than others.



Figure 45: A scan of a complimentary drink token issued by Chinese Arts Centre for Apotheca during a May 2009 preview at the gallery. Image by Aaron Mo.

So far I have mentioned venues that relate to previews. I have noticed that consumers of certain creative subgroups also have after-event venues of their own. For instance, I know that the pub Big Hands is the place to go to after indie music concerts in the Oxford Road area. However, after attending an event by the Marina Abramović, a performance artist, at Whitworth Art Gallery, which is also on Oxford Road, I went to Big Hands which was empty.

Events may honeypot into one place, which may prompt the acquaintance of people and can lead to the attendance of after-events (the time when networking and exchange of information seems to be most effective). However, it is important to note that events are not entirely inclusive. This is even more so with after-events.

## Chapter 11: The spatial use and processes in workplaces

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A cultural and creative industry is fragmented into networks of people that are made up of trust between people with weak and strong ties. It seems that face-to-face meetings in collective workplaces have a central role in uniting creatives and synergising knowledge amongst those in the cultural and creative industries with similar cognitive direction. Many activities that contribute to the accumulation of knowledge are performed as a group. Like network sociality, the meetings could be frequent snippets of acknowledgements or brief exchanges. This exchange generates a noisy environment. Although accommodating for networking may be central to the cultural and creative industries, there are a couple of issues: not all activities work in the same environment and there can be networking barriers.

Not all creatives' activities can be performed in a noisy environment. Some creative activities are more individualistic and are better performed in an environment according to the individual's liking, such as with the radio on in the background or complete silence. Yet, during the fieldworks I observed some workplaces that are used by a range of activities. These workplaces are often cafés popular with creatives (in daytime) in both Brno and Manchester, and semi-private workplaces. I have observed several mechanisms that some workplaces design to prevent a clash of environments (Hadfield, 2006) of one activity over another. I will indicate two methods: spatial and temporal segregation of activities<sup>219</sup>.

It is possible to design-in space that caters for a particular creative environment, such as a part of the building that tends to prompt networking. This is necessary as Van Heur (2010 a & b) and Gu (2010) had claimed not all creatives have the conversing and networking skills. I would add that this is normally due to a mismatching skill set created by different cultural subtleties, like language. Hence, my better English and knowledge of its social life led to a more comprehensive Manchester data set than that in Brno. This substantial problem can be partially overcome by cultural and network training or the use of socialites as a means of finding commonalities with strangers, e.g., McRobbie's (2011) 'ice-breakers'.

There will be times that a creative attends an event (or after-event) and there is no one available to make introductions for them. In these situations networking will be difficult, however, the attendance at the event can still be valuable as a reference point or aid in establishing future connections; the event can be a talking point and a way of establishing commonality and initiating a relationship. As seen in the final part of this chapter, spaces that prompt 'bumping into' and 'funnelling' could lead to snippets of acknowledgement or brief exchanges (and

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<sup>219</sup> For general reviews, see Görgülü, T., 2007; Sidawi, B., 2012; Atkinson, R., 2007.

thus enable what Currid (2007) would call hypersocialisation), which was discussed as essential for the cultural and creative industries in the 'face-to-face encounters' section in chapter four.

I have also noted that there are cases when creatives themselves create their own spatial and temporal segregation of activities and also create 'bumping into' and 'funnelling' conditions in collective workplaces. These terms were developed from my own observations.

The movie attached to this thesis entitled: 'Islington\_Mill\_case\_study', illustrates many of the topics reported in this thesis in one workplace, Islington Mill. It highlights excellent examples of spaces being designed to separate different creative practices and promote networking activities. At times problems arise from creative activities, especially intensification of activities in a space and combining live and play in the same area. I would argue that these are important considerations for those who are involved in creative-led development.

#### **Resolving 'clashing practices' through spatial solutions**

Chapter nine suggested that some collective workplaces host a range of creative activities in the same room, some of which are not compatible with each other. For example Islington Mill is a venue that hosts both talks by artists and exhibits sound-orientated artworks on the ground floor level, both are audible experiences and constitute noise interference to each other. These events should not be in the same room.

Observations from both fieldworks suggest that potentially clashing activities in the same workplace are normally physically separate and held in different rooms – in the case of the example given above talks by artists were normally held in the gig space and the sound-orientated artworks were exhibited in the gallery space of Islington Mill. Another method used by workplace managers to prevent clashing of activities was to block certain activities in the collective workplace. For example, the manager of Islington Mill did not accept bands from some music genres, like heavy metal, residing in the complex, as he believes the sound would disturb other residents.

#### **Separation by floors**

The separation of creative activities by floors that I have seen was almost exclusively found in shops and semi-private workplaces. Like a department store, Afflecks is more or less split by floors into themes, such as fancy dress, eating and drinking, original designs, etc. In the case of semi-private workplaces, they are the only examples where different subgroups' creative

production is mixed over many floors.

In Islington Mill, a furniture maker occupied the only ground-floor workspace. He was the only creative at Islington Mill willing to pay for the largest studio space (it is an annex of the engine house) that had direct access to the forecourt and temporary car park. He was the only resident furniture maker at Islington Mill, as the other units did not meet the needs of a furniture maker. Mostly ceramicists occupied the first floor<sup>220</sup> because it had the kitchen and toilets: a constant water supply is important for this discipline. Although, there was also a toilet on the third floor, the first floor was preferred because the equipment and goods were heavy (Islington Mill does not have lifts or escalators).

At the collective workplace, called: 'Rogue Artists Studios', occupying two floors of a former mill, there was a fine art and plastic art separation. As far as I know, this was not a rule of 'Rogue Artists Studios'. The only explanation I was told was that once it became obvious that one subgroup dominated a floor, more people from the same subgroup asked to be put on the same floor. There were creatives from other subgroups, but I was told few of them stayed in the studio for a long time.

In semi-private workplaces, it seems that different subgroups have different amenity and infrastructural needs during creative production, which makes the separation of subgroups natural.

### **Raised levels**

It was observed that some of the popular creative-populated cafés and pubs in Manchester had a raised area. They were used differently because of the features on the raised areas.

At the time of the Manchester fieldwork, catching Wi-Fi at Nexus café was only possible on the raised part. Multi-socket plug adapters were provided at the raised parts of the café because of the concentration of laptop users in these areas.

The café CUP, at Manchester's Northern Quarter, also had a raised area. Board games were found on a shelf at the upper level. I have been to the café several times because it was often used as a meeting place and was a place for good food. On these occasions, I saw people playing the board games only at the upper levels. There was nothing to prevent people from playing at the lower

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<sup>220</sup> The 'rogue' first floor resident is a fashion designer. According to the workplace manager, she was one of the original residents of the disused mill. At the time, there was only one floor suitable to work in. In the 10-years history of Islington Mill, people had come and gone, and the floors started to self-organise themselves to subgroups or other categories. She never thought of moving floors because she was happy with her unit.



levels. My hunch is that board games are useful as a networking tool or catalyst.

I have used board games as a way to spend time in a café without spending a lot of money on endless amounts of food and drink. They also have the added advantage of normally being an enjoyable activity that required little concentration, which can be inviting for people to come and greet or chat to you. This is opposite to what happens when people are staring at their computer screens or appear to be in conversation, which normally prevents others approaching. Being at the upper level was useful as a vantage point for people watching or to be seen by other people; so as to increase the chance of talking to someone. The same interpretation relates to people dancing on raised areas in pubs and cafés at night and clubs.

### **‘Rooms’**

Cafés and pubs are predominantly used for eating, drinking, and gathering activities. For many of my informants they are also used for non-location specific activities, such as writing and programming.

Yet, it seems that some activities have their optimum space in cafés or pubs. One informant from Manchester reveals that he chooses his seating position in Folk Café depending on what he was doing and how sociable he was feeling at the time. For example, he sits in a room at the back of the café if he is writing something. He chooses the room because of the potential of fewer people talking to him as it has fewer tables, is away from the speakers, and is a dead end. The other extreme is the morning after a gig. He tells me that he feels more sociable and wants to talk to people. He does this by sitting beside the window and close to the entrance (it is also on the side of the toilets) and reads the newspaper. He told me he did this because of what we will come to know as ‘bumping into’: friends passing the café would see him and wave hello, also he would briefly speak to those who enter the café or are going to the toilet. At our meeting, we sat away from the entrance and he was facing away from the window. The only people who spoke to him were his close friends who were walking past the café.

The different activities and use of space is more interesting if we consider how the spaces appear. The writing space at Folk café was known to the informant as the ‘red room’ (the wall was painted red), the meeting space was the ‘wallpaper room’ (only one side of the café had wallpaper), and the socialising space was called the ‘white room’ (the rest of the café walls were painted white). Rooms can literally mean the creation of space within a building or other structure, separated by walls or partitions from other parts, but could also mean the creation of different perceived experiences in different parts of the same

room. They were commonly found in cafés and pubs in both case studies.

Just as I was about to leave Brno, Spolek opened a second floor. I do not know how and whether creatives will use the second floor. What I had observed was that the café also compartmented into different 'rooms' on the ground floor, see: Movie 3 (figure 46). Two 'rooms' were formed using four elements: structure, wall colour, furniture and amenities. There is a pillar and two extending wall partitions from either sides of the cafe; this was not enough to create real rooms. The feeling of being in different 'rooms' was emphasised by the walls being painted either white or green and each side containing different styles of furniture and, at times, different exhibitions. I have seen that certain activities tend to occur in one 'room' over the other. The computer-based activities tend to happen in 'white room' because here there were many multi-socket plug adapters. The 'green room' was darker; therefore, the room was used more for talking and less for reading and working on a computer.

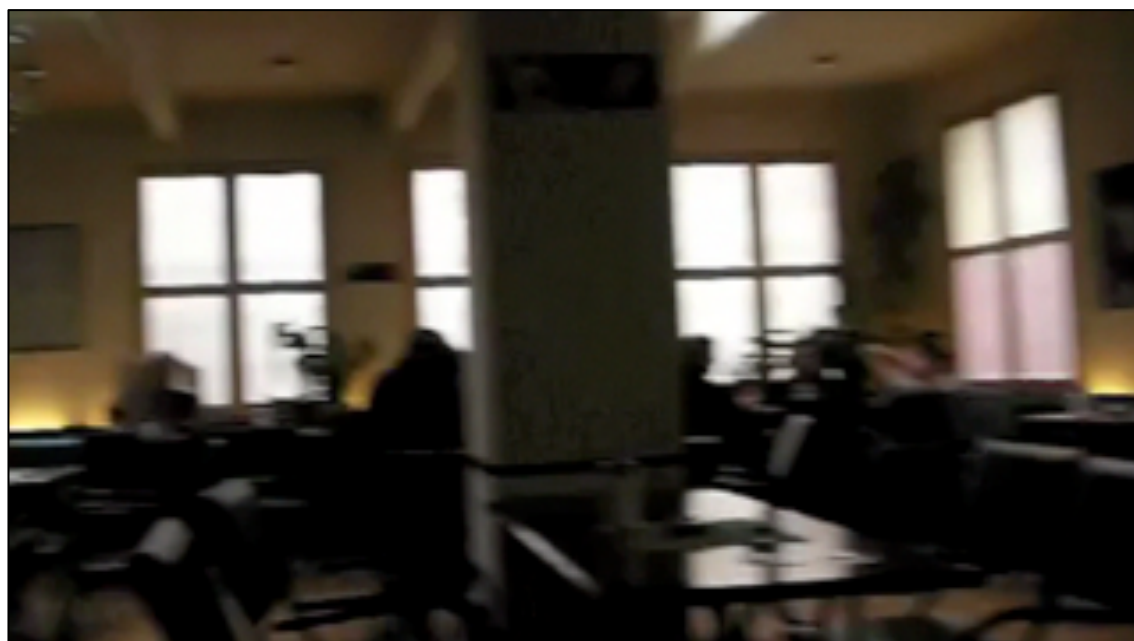


Figure 46: Screenshot of Movie 3 - A slow-motion pan of the Brno café Spolek. During the daytime, it is normal for people to work or read newspapers in the white room, and to have conversations in the green room. Video still by Aaron Mo, March 2009.

### **Temporal segregation of activities: changing the overall use of public and semi-public workplaces**

Using the time of the day as a way to separate conflicting activities is not a new idea. On the city level, there have been the night-time economy and 24 hour city policies. On a personal level, some of my informants only do Internet research in the morning and administrative work after lunch. Setting different

environmental ‘situations’ throughout the day can easily control the separation of work activities at home. For instance, a graphic designer could simply unhook the Internet cable at certain periods of the day or turning off the Wi-Fi; this can prevent the creative from Internet researching and use the period to do computer work like photo-editing. Changing the situation can affect the types of activities that can take place at a certain time.

I have also observed this sort of ‘situational management’ in collective workplaces, especially in cafés, pubs and the public parts of semi-private workplaces.<sup>221</sup> Spatial segregation may not be enough to discourage different group activities, such as work meetings and parties, from clashing. As we will see, ‘situational management’ may control the type of group activities in the workplace at a particular time by altering light and noise levels and the positioning of furniture as the day passes.

### **Light**

Many cafés that open until 11pm or midnight (late night cafés) in Brno and Manchester are used during the day for meetings, many of which involve: looking at or writing papers, reading the paper and working on a laptop computer. As the day goes by, the café becomes darker. Bits of paper become harder to read and not all laptop keyboards light up.<sup>222</sup> I have seen that artificial lighting is switched on during the early evening, but either dimmed down or replaced with candle light from 7-8pm onwards. I see very few people using the computer or reading papers for a long time at cafés during the evenings.

### **Noise**

I observed a change in noise level and the type of noise generated between day and night time in many of the late night cafés and pubs in Manchester and some in Brno. This was less so in Brno because not all Brno cafés and pubs play music in the background.

In the daytime, there are fewer people in late night cafés as compared to the night time and most of such cafés play the radio or recorded jazz, ambient or easy-listening music in the background.

From 6-8 p.m., the majority of these Manchester workplaces increase the volume of the background music, which has then become more scene/genre specific. For example, the CUP starts playing Downtempo, Trip-Hop and Nu-

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<sup>221</sup> Such as the club space and the gallery of Islington Mill.

<sup>222</sup> I have a MacBook Pro and Acer netbook. I can only use the netbook in the dark if I tip the screen towards the keyboard, which is an uncomfortable situation to work in.

Jazz (the genres associated with its DJ owner, Mr. Scruff), while a pub next door starts playing more Northern Soul songs. This attracts different audiences, with different dress styles. If Brno workplaces provide background music, it is normally constant throughout the day. The specialisation of cafés and pubs in Manchester has an advantage as you can almost guarantee that a person whom you could network with would have similar tastes in music to you.

There have been many times when I have worked in these cafés and pubs both during the day and at night. I can say I have found the daytime better for working. As well as the light issue, it becomes harder to think when the music becomes louder and the customers start going to these places with the purpose of drinking and talking. The reader may remember earlier in the ethnography discussion that I was not the only person to work at the Northern Quarter at night. I have seen people using headphones as a way of managing the noise in the café (figure 47). I have used this technique myself to mentally separate my mind from other people in the café and help to focus on my work.

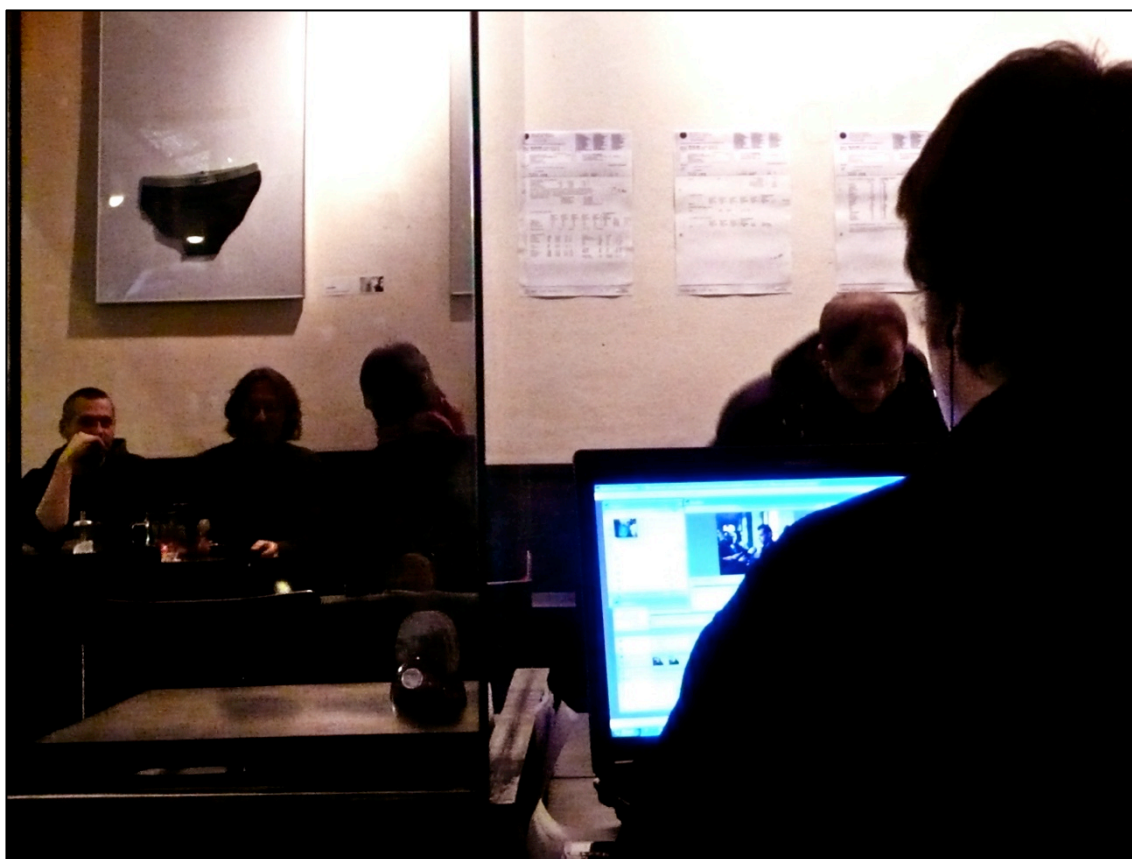


Figure 47: A creative in Kavárna Švanda, Brno, working with earphones on. Other mechanisms he used were to adjust his position so that the light faced the keyboard and to sit away from large groups of people. Photograph by Aaron Mo, September 2010.

A noisier playscape (see, e.g., Chatterton & Hollands, 2002) is useful for the cultural and creative industry. It seems to be good for networking as it masks your conversation, so you do not feel too conscious of strangers overhearing you and thinking that you are an idiot.

It is important to be aware and understand that the increase in local noise generation is inevitable when there is a high concentration of late night cafés and pubs, such as the Northern Quarter. Therefore, anyone living in the area must be prepared to accept the active nightlife. Even my informants who lived in the Northern Quarter and used it for networking could not reside there for more than a year. One of my informants from Brno told me that Spolek now closes at 10 pm, which is very early for any pub or café in Brno because a resident was so fed up with the noise that he went into Spolek, in his pyjamas, and hit a customer. I suggest playscapes should not contain living spaces. Chapter ten has emphasised on the importance of the often nocturnal happenings of events and after-events for cultural and creative industries. It appears that events and after-events are often in cafés and pubs. Therefore, it is not good for the cafés and pubs to close early.

Noise generation is normal in urban playscapes. There are times when sounds are meant to dominate workplaces, particularly during events. When events are on, they change the use of the space dramatically, whereby one type of noise dominates the room. It either becomes the dominant noise or people stay silent during the event (see '*culture & land use*' section in chapter two). Hence, events require management to avoid sound clashes of different group activities. For example, I have seen a case when a group of Brno creatives set up a toilet gallery<sup>223</sup> in Kavárna Švanda. Most of the people were at the café to meet people or to work, not for the preview. The café normally does not play background music, but on this occasion, music could only be heard from the basement toilets, where the creatives had a DJ. On top of this, there was a lot of shouting, especially from one female on an unknown drug. This disturbed the non-participants of the preview. After an hour, the café owner asked the creatives to leave. There was another occasion when noise had to be managed. This time it was in Manchester's Castlefield Gallery. On one day, there was a video installation on the mezzanine floor and a talk presented by Blackburn Museum on the lower floor. The workplace manager muted the video installation so that people could hear the talk. The hosting of events often leads to conflicting sound issues. It has been observed in both case study cities that venues cannot multitask when separate sound-orientated activities are happening at the same time.

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<sup>223</sup> A toilet gallery is when artworks are placed in a toilet and arranged like a gallery exhibition.

## Furniture

Some spaces in collective workplaces are used for many purposes. For instance, the raised part of Nexus café is used for work during the day and as a dance floor in the evening. This means the tables and chairs must be removed or rearranged.

Figures 48 to 53 show how the orientation of furniture changes in the club space of Islington Mill depending on the event at the time. Showing that movable, rather than fixed, furniture and storage space are useful in a workplace that is used by many group activities.



Figure 48: For presentation, sofas are organised in a semi-circle, facing a projection. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009.



Figure 49: When a band plays at the main stage, the furniture is put to the side. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2009.





Figure 50: When events have a gig with alternating stages because of different sound set-ups between the support and main acts, sofas, tables, and chairs are moved to one side. Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009.

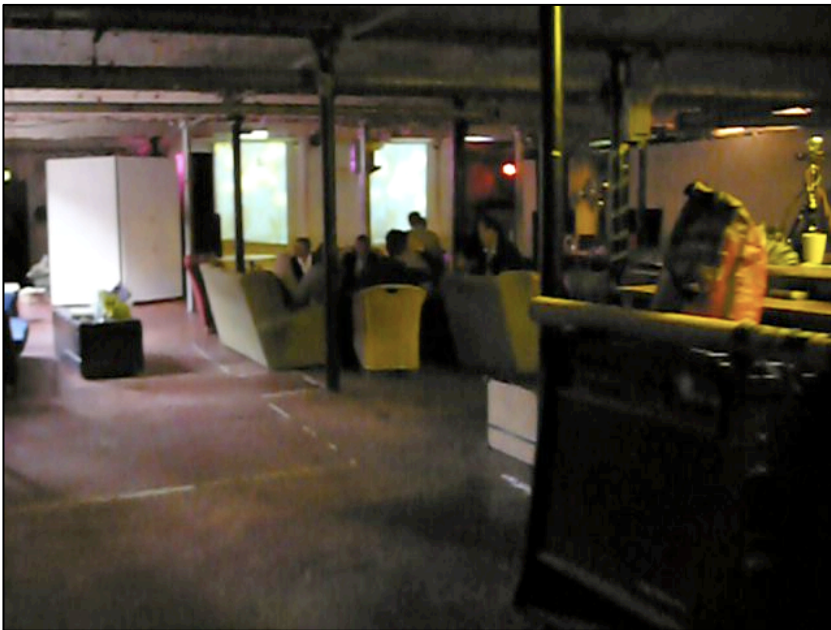


Figure 51: As common space for Islington Mill residents, the furniture is moved to facing each other and located at the centre of the room. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.



Figure 52: For talks, the sofas and chairs are facing the projection. Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009.



Figure 53: As club space, some furniture are kept to the side, but most of them are stored away. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009.



### **‘Bumping into’ and ‘funnelling’ spaces to support networking**

Events have been observed as a useful tool for networking. However, interaction opportunities can be inhibited because the noise generated is too loud (gig) or talking is not allowed when the event is on (artist talk). Moreover, people have the tendency to socialise in their set groups, often the closest network. Yet, people do network, or at least hypersocialise, in these events.

Walking past or standing next to a socialite and then letting him or her introduce the creative is a useful tool. But, what if the socialite is busy talking to someone else and there is a queue of people waiting to be introduced, and the creative is too shy to go up to a stranger or newly acquainted person and start networking?

I have observed two ways in which space enables people to make short encounters, so they do not need a huge investment in conversation time. Even those who were using play activities as a way to escape or those not confident in their conversation and networking skills are able to hypersocialise: this act of networking can still be achieved by simply exchanging business cards or writing their contact details like e-mail address and phone number on a piece of paper. McEvily & Zaheer (1999) noted these as significant acts in the cultural and creative industries. I call these ‘bumping into’ and ‘funnelling’ spaces.

### **‘Bumping into’**

The space where people may ‘bump into’ acquaintances is a small window in time to interact with the person encountered. I have seen it occurring in an event or after-event (sometimes in public spaces), which leads to chance encounters. The two people may know each other and start a conversation. If they do not know each other, the two strangers may at least, start small talk. I have observed specific occasions when these spaces tend to happen:

- *Previews:* Previews require roaming around the gallery and partial attention to the exhibited artworks. The act of ‘bumping into’ an acquaintance may happen when two people are looking at the same piece of work and one makes a comment on it. I have also noticed that people just walk around the gallery hoping to make eye contact with people they know. I discovered that the first technique was useful when meeting new people and the second is more effective once you know a lot of people in the event. As I got more complacent with networking towards the end of both fieldworks, I started to rely on the latter technique. The biggest difference I found between the two case studies was that Brno preview attendees pay more attention to the work<sup>224</sup> and

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<sup>224</sup> Many people were even taking pictures of the artwork in Brno previews. I hardly see the attendees in Manchester taking pictures, and if they do it is not framed only to the artwork.

seemed to have more closed huddles of social groups than those in Manchester.

- *The dance floor in clubs:* Clubbing is a good way of meeting new people in Brno and Manchester. I have found that people are more open and willing to talk to strangers at this kind of event. Being a regular at a club night makes you a familiar face to other regulars. The regulars may not have deep conversations with each other, but can build up a series of 'passing acknowledgements.' For example, occasionally they greet each other, comment on a song or apologise when they knock each other's drink over. These snippets of interactions can lead to trust and bond building.

For example, of five people who became regulars at a Manchester club night called 'Smile' at the 'Star and Garter' pub, only two of them had met each other before. They went to Smile because of their liking for indie music and desire to avoid the 'typical hanging out places in the Northern Quarter'. Over the years, the individuals crossed paths when they were on the dance floor, getting a drink, or in queues. Serial encounters brought by repetitive actions and events led to increased interactions, building up a friends' network. These five people helped set up Islington Mill. The dance floor could form and strengthen ties that may lead to future collaborations.

- *Standing in a pub:* The culture of standing in pubs is a noticeable difference between Manchester and Brno. Standing and drinking in pubs and outside is common in British pubs, while the people prefer to sit down in most Czech pubs. People tend to go to a different pub if their first choice is full. The pub U Bláhovky is the only pub in Brno where people are willing to stand and drink. However, standing is only allowed outside the pub, which is also not very common. The outside space is like an additional room.

By standing in Manchester pubs, there is less space to walk around but it creates the ability to hold more customers. It is normal to make passing acknowledgements when trying to go through groups of people or when someone accidentally knocks someone's drink over.

My studies had observed the act of 'bumping into' an acquaintance is likely in Manchester than Brno because the customer must go to the bar when ordering drinks (it is table service in Brno), meaning there are more people walking about in a pub in Manchester than in Brno.

### **Funnelling**

There are some actions that can happen in specific spaces, which lead to a

concentration of people. This may bring people together and cause passing acknowledgement or hypersocialisation. Both fieldworks have shown four cases:

- *The toilet queue:* Putnam (2000) noted that a queue could become a locus for the generation of social capital. His observation comes from the office workplace. When it comes to events and after-events, it is the toilet queue that provokes hypersocialisation. A queue is formed because these occasions often involve alcohol (which is a diuretic), which makes people want to urinate more. As for workplaces, queues form if they do not have many toilets.

I noticed that many people initiate a conversation by asking if 'this is the queue for the toilet'. I have started conversations with a person in front or behind me as a method of distraction from my desperate need to relieve myself. I am not the only one who has overheard people talking about it.

- *The main entrances and corridors:* Unless the use of other doors is permitted; when someone goes to a workplace, the main entrance is used at least twice. Therefore, there is a high chance of meeting people when approaching the entrance. It is a place where people greet each other rather than have a conversation. This act can develop familiar faces for future networking opportunities.

Corridors are also used as a quiet area when a performance is happening. When I have bumped into informants and start a conversation at gigs, we normally move the conversation to the corridor because we can hear each other. I have noticed that corridors are particularly used when the support acts are playing, as well as the intermissions. The corridors are a common network space so I would hang around this space to meet other people who also wanted to talk.

- *Standing by a pub/bar counter:* Clubs do not have table service, therefore, a person hanging around the bar counter can speak to people who are waiting to be served. These people are known as 'barflys'.<sup>225</sup> The bar counter is also a quieter area to have a conversation because the speakers are not pointing towards it. The same phenomenon can be said for Manchester pubs.

The 'barfly' is different in Brno. I have noticed that they are usually a bar worker or a friend of a worker of the pub, i.e., most likely to be a creative. The bar works like a raised area (see the section on '*spatial segregation of activities*', as well as the '*floor and room arrangements*' section in this chapter) in that it is a vantage point to be seen and talked to. At the time

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<sup>225</sup> The 'barfly' is a term I had picked up when I was clubbing in Camden, London.

of the Brno fieldwork, Fléda and Trojka 3 were the only café or pub that did not provide table service.

- *The smoking area:* At the time of the fieldwork, there was a smoking ban in Manchester but not in Brno. Therefore, there were smoking areas in Manchester but not in Brno public workplaces.<sup>226</sup> Conversations could begin by someone asking for a lighter. It was easy to hypersocialise in the smoking area because people seem to be more willing to talk when standing outside for a limited period. Although I am a non-smoker, I have found standing around the smoking area was useful for data gathering and networking. The smoking ban and British pub culture gives Manchester more ‘bumping into’ and ‘funnelling’ opportunities than in Brno.

The difference between ‘bumping into’ and ‘funnelling’ spaces is that the former relies largely on chance meetings while you can place yourself in funnelling areas so that you can hypersocialise and position yourself to tactically network with someone.

Previous chapters in this ethnography discussion have identified collective workplaces as important places for the cultural and creative industries. They gather people and are used by creatives for an array of activities, some of which may clash. This ethnographic research has identified several spatial and situational management techniques used to resolve these potential clashes. In addition, if collective workplaces provide conditions where people are more likely to meet or be concentrated into a part of the workplace, such areas could prompt people to network *via* face-to-face encounters, even if they are strangers. Developing new networks may lead to access to larger pools of resources, which can only aid the development of a creative practice. It appears that ‘bumping into’ and ‘funnelling’ spaces are less common in Brno than in Manchester.

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<sup>226</sup> Smoking inside private workplaces was subject to the host’s discretion.

## Conclusion

### Background

This thesis began from my lifelong interest in the arts, and their interaction with the urban environment. At first, it was about how art and music capture the mood and vibrancy of cities. Once I began to study Town & Country Planning at University College London in 2000, this interest evolved into the reciprocal influence of creativity and cities.<sup>227</sup> In particular creative-led gentrification was the subject I decided to explore for my Master's thesis (Mo, 2005a) and its findings provoked further questions about the relationship between the different locations of creative activities, which became one of the important elements underpinning this PhD project.

My self-financing of the PhD was a double-edged sword in that it gave me intellectual freedom to explore seemingly unrelated secondary research from apparently unrelated academic fields, unorthodox methods of research and unusual comparative case studies. The novel theoretical, methodological and empirical combination of Planning Studies in the field led to findings on the spatial and social aspects of creative practices and networks at various geographic scales. However, dipping into several academic fields meant that the research was no longer focused on a purely planning audience. Instead, this thesis has orientated itself to a wider audience wishing to gain more insight into creatives, their activities, and their relationship to the built environment.

### Foundations of the conceptual framework

During the Master's fieldwork, I organised an interview with the Professor Emeritus of Urban Planning at Columbia University, Peter Marcuse. Before the interview could commence, he asked for my personal opinion on Richard Florida's (2002) *The Rise of The Creative Class*. At that point, I realised this theory is a significant notion within my academic field. Hence, it is right that discussing the Creative Class is the departure point of this dissertation.

The literature review in this thesis begins by disassembling the members of the *Creative Class* [sic], then makes a case for rejecting it, and finally reassesses who should be seen as the creative people (and other important figures in the industries). The following chapter looks at different ideas in understanding the interactions amongst cities, creative people, cultural and creative industries, and the city system.

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<sup>227</sup> See Mo, 2005 – 2012.

Chapter two begins with a discussion on the Masters' finding that there is a geographic and building-level stratification of creatives in New York. This backs up the previous chapter's argument that people working in the cultural and creative industries cannot easily be identified as one group, nor could they be contained in one area of the city. However, areas that contain certain groups of people or cater for specific sets of activities are desirable when planning for creative-led developments. This thesis' ethnography agrees with the attempts to cluster some collective activities; however, the organic evolution of 'natural' cultural districts (Stern and Seifert, 1998 & 2007) suggests more is needed to encourage synergy of different cultural districts with different groups of people, activities and cognitive direction. As Peter Hall (1998) illustrated when discussing the synergy of ideas in Manchester during the industrial revolution, these districts could be within a city or beyond a city boundary.

Chapters three and four are theoretical assessments of the creatives working in the contemporary globalisation of local cultural and creative industries. The key philosophies used in these chapters were: Becker's (1982) observation of divergent creative activities and Boschma's (2005) paper '*Proximity and Innovation*', which helped explain the ways that local cultural and creative industries may be affected by certain 'zones of influences'. Furthermore, van Heur (2010 a & b), Gu (2010) and Hauge & Hrac's (2010) studies take on the theme of collaboration that can be evolved because of shared 'aesthetic cognition', e.g., formed by becoming acquaintances through face-to-face encounters (Putnam, 2000; Storper & Venables, 2004; Currid, 2007). These two chapters particularly emphasise the importance of forming networks and the impact of networks on a creative's practice.

The role of the final chapter in the literature review is to provide an overview of social-economic and cultural differences as well as similarities that exist between Manchester and Brno. In short, despite the historical differences in economic history,<sup>228</sup> there is a convergence towards the entrepreneurial cities concept (Harvey, 1989), by both becoming logistic hubs for businesses. Both case-study cities try to attract multinational companies, but only Manchester has been reported to make huge efforts in attracting creative and cultural-orientated businesses (for example, the BBC in Salford's MediaCityUK). The absence of any attempt by the Brno government to build a cultural and creative industries strategy was suggested by Pavla Petrová (2011) when she profiled cultural policies and trends in her country profile of the Czech Republic for Compendium'.<sup>229</sup> She reported (in 2011) that national cultural spending is mainly focused on Prague. She added that access to governmental funding for cultural activity in cities like Brno is mostly at European level; this, combined with a tradition of local creatives moving between and cooperating with other cities,

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<sup>228</sup> Notably Manchester's capitalism and Brno's communism.

<sup>229</sup> Also see Petrová, P. (2012)

means that Brnoites' creative activities are likely to extend beyond the city boundary, much more than in Manchester.

Following this part of the conclusion are deductions and some personal opinions formed on the basis of the main body of this thesis. This is a Planning Studies thesis and therefore will attempt to suggest some ideas that could help the city's governance in encouraging the growth of their cultural and creative industries. However, the following section explains that policy implications could be problematic, mostly because of the changing context between the fieldwork (2008-2009) and the time of publication (2013); the most influential factor is that Europe-wide austerity has led to financial support to the cultural and creative industries being low in priority for many European governments. With this in mind, this thesis will reflect on; the new insight to the 'culture cycle'<sup>230</sup> and its relationship to cities, in addition to, further academic and methodological questions that derived from the study. The thesis now concludes by summarising its contribution to knowledge of a city's relationship with cultural and creative industries.

#### **Finding 1: The importance of collective workplaces, events and after-events**

After the review of the '*network sociality*' section in chapter four, it can be assumed that Internet platforms like social network sites have great importance in removing borders, providing instant information, and keeping people in the loop of related interests, as well as friends' activities and interests. However, I would question an apparent trend to place too much focus on technology and virtual networks (European Commission, 2010 & 2012). Wittel's '*network sociality*' has its limits in the cultural and creative industries in that the information exchanged *via* virtual platforms are often amongst those who are connected with each other. The provision and accessibility of the Internet is important, but it should not be overemphasised in developing local cultural and creative industries.

Virtual communication could help creatives with maintaining existing networks and passing information at a faster rate, but it appears that they are not very effective in making new physical networks and passing a wide range of information. Face-to-face encounters appear to be better at encouraging the latter; therefore, the provision of meeting places is important. My own experience during the PhD work has showed me that forming networks and exchanging information with strangers is more fruitful by face-to-face encounters, especially hypersocialisation (Currid, 2007). During 'following'/'shadowing' activities (Czarniawska, 2007; McDonald, 2005; Marcus

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<sup>230</sup> The culture cycle is a concept taken from UNESCO's 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2013)

G., 1995) whilst in the field, I have observed all my creatives invest a lot of time in travelling and attending meetings. In addition, as seen with the Sheffield artists in Manchester, the visiting creatives are more willing to hypersocialise.

Chapter five identified typically recognised places as sites for important networking and knowledge exchange activities like hypersocialisation (Currid, 2007). The fieldwork has identified these sites as collective workplaces, which are normally cafés, pubs and other entertainment venues. When discussing the empirical findings and observations, chapters ten and eleven add that the face-to-face encounters (especially with strangers) tend to happen in certain spaces and times (particularly during events and after-events). The most efficient collective workplaces for networking and knowledge exchange activities require masses of people to ‘honeypot’ in a place that encourages people to talk to each other. These workplaces are often ‘googleable’ and easy to navigate from public transport; as observed when comparing the well-attended events at an empty shop unit at the Triangle Shopping Centre and the sparsely populated events in various Urban Splash vacant spaces.<sup>231</sup>

As seen in Islington Mill and Spolek, not only is it important to stabilise and sustain a collective workplace in the same place over time, it is also essential to keep the same (hands-on) owner or manager in the collective workplace for a long period of time. A long-term owner or manager can become well integrated into sections of the ‘creative world’ that visit the hub, may develop empathy with them, can be flexible enough to negotiate late payment, manipulate space that will benefit creatives, and connect people who could benefit from being mutual acquaintances. This supports Musterd’s (2004) observation that creatives and some of their activities could benefit if workplaces are privately owned and have consistent management, especially with a hands-on owner.

Collective workplaces host events; managers dictate the nature of the event. The ethnography highlighted the importance of events in collective workplaces in the creative ecosystem. They have the potential to ‘honeypot’ large groups of people into a place and normally involve the late-night consumption of substances. This is important for creating ‘buzz’, trust building, networking and exchanging vast amounts of information (Storper & Venables, 2004), which are vital for the cultural and creative industries. This agrees with the research on events that are mentioned in the ‘*trust*’ section of chapter four in this thesis.

After-events are when groups of people from an event continue socialising once the event is finished. Those found in an after-event are even more exclusive than at events as participants are normally those sharing strong ties. It has been observed that the after-event is essential in the cultural and creative industries because it is when creatives and those from the blurred edges tend

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<sup>231</sup> I found some of these places difficult to find, even though I had the phone number of the curator and could ask him for directions.



to exchange more information. Despite its noisy nature and possible encouragement of intoxicated behaviour, it is believed that the after-event is very useful for the cultural and creative industry.

The use of events and after-events should be seen as both positive and negative for a creative's development. Positive in that it can lead to pools of resources being shared; negative because of the lack of depth and variation of people, materials and knowledge available to creatives during these occasions. Events and after-events curated by cultural facilitators like workplace managers often cater for specific aesthetic tastes or creative subgroups, meaning that they bring together those with common cognitive direction, taste, and who are members of certain scenes. Just as Shaw (2010) suggested, the role and influence of cultural facilitators who manage activities should not be overlooked when enabling a creative environment.

### **Finding 2: Creatives need to be mobile**

The thesis' ethnography began by observing creatives' profile patterns amongst those studied in Manchester and Brno (chapter six). Not only does the chapter provide context to the fieldwork findings, it also gives descriptions of Manchester and Brno as cities suitable for creatives. Hence, it provides the reader an insight into why a creative may be attracted to, or leaves a second order city.

Just as Richard Florida (2002 & 2005) suggested, a city may attract a range of creatives if it provides a diversity of cultural experiences, contains important cultural institutions such as universities, and job prospects that may supplement a creative's practice. However, these factors may not be the only condition. Patterns emerged from both fieldworks that many of my informants chose to move to Manchester or Brno respectively, instead of the nation's capital city, because of its lower cost of living, slower pace of life and having family and friends living in or close to the city.

There seems to be a generational divide with regard to Florida's explanatory factors. The cultural experience of a city, such as gig-going and clubbing, together with the possibility of receiving institutional support are particularly important considerations for many of my younger informants when choosing to migrate into a city. Job prospects seem to be a more influential factor for older creatives. As the creatives get older, getting a job that can supplement their creative work becomes a priority. Creative and cultural-orientated institutions and other hubs, such as Islington Mill and Spolek, have been identified as important for both younger and older creatives: these places provide both entertainment and employment.

Manchester and Brno may both be well-recognised, culturally active, relatively diverse cities and have an abundance of formal cultural institutions with respect to their country, yet, the amount and profile of migration involving Manchester and Brno do not seem proportionally equal. Manchester has been observed to have a stronger pulling ability for creatives, especially foreign creatives, than the city of Brno. As chapter five suggested, this is possibly because Manchester is a self-reliant and reflective creative city with a well-known cultural heritage (that revolves around its music industry); the strong British national economy and focus towards the creative economy, leading to relatively well-paid jobs in its creative and cultural-orientated institutions and a multicultural background in a basically anglophone context.

At the same time, I have observed that many creatives from Manchester permanently migrate towards or temporarily visit larger cities with more established creative markets, like London. Limited access to cultural gatekeepers and further education are often cited as the main reasons for leaving.<sup>232</sup> The trend of many people coming to and leaving Manchester suggests a high turnover and a racially diverse mixture of creatives in the city. This is similar to Putnam's (2000) study of America's highly mobile community, prompting a 'nomadic existence' (Putnam, 2000, p. 204). Consequently, these people have a willingness to talk and network to others quickly, thereby forming a wide network of weak ties. Subsequently – just as in the '*Manchester as self-reliant and reflective creative city*' section in chapter five – cooperation is encouraged because of a ripe, talkative community and networking environment that permits creatives to learn from each other, exchanging information, promoting themselves and developing new contacts. All of these are essential for creatives to develop their products. It appears that some of my informants used their time in Manchester as a cheap way to develop and establish a product. Without the ability of attracting cultural gatekeepers, second order cities can normally only be 'developmental incubators' and a preliminary stepping-stone for a creative's career.

There is also evidence of Brno creatives using the city as what I have observed as a 'developmental incubator'. However, it appears that permanent out-migration tends to be at a slower rate,<sup>233</sup> and if they do migrate, many have a tendency to return to Brno. Despite the seemingly weak creative market in Brno (see chapter eight), my informants were less prepared to move, when working as creatives.<sup>234</sup> Important factors were their limited possession of a second language, which discouraged migration to cities like London. Cultural gatekeepers of national importance do visit Brno; it is a cheap and quick

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<sup>232</sup> However, the wet weather was another commonly cited reason from creatives. This could be a unique case for North-western England.

<sup>233</sup> This is based on the average age of my Brno informants, who appear to be older than their Manchester counterparts, and that I can see (from the information on websites and social networking sites) that many of my informants in the 2008 fieldwork are still active in Brno in 2012.

<sup>234</sup> After the Brno fieldwork, some of my informants have since left Brno, however, most of them have changed career path.

transport hub to visit Prague, Vienna and Bratislava, and the city has an adequate supply of technician and lectureship positions for creatives (there is a high concentration of respected theatres and Czech universities in the city). It appears that a lot of Brno creatives tend to enter the creative market *via* the Internet; that the city is a reasonable 'developmental incubator'; and, that the neighbouring large cities with stronger creative markets, such as Prague, are not strong enough to outweigh the higher living cost, and hence, it would be rational enough for Czech creatives to reside in Brno for longer than their Manchester counterparts. Manchester also has a particular problem in attracting cultural gatekeepers.

Brno's ability to sustain creatives for a longer period than Manchester is positive, but it does have its problems when it comes to networking. When combined with a culture of slow acquainting with strangers and the moderately low level of in-movement to the city, its cultural and creative industries are made up mainly of strong-ties with communities that are impenetrable to outsiders because of an inherent lack of trust. According to Boschma (2005), this may lead to 'innovation lock-in' and as one Brno creative puts it, the 'second city mentality', which may have a negative impact on the development to Brno's creative economy.

To counter this, the Brno creatives rely on themselves to diversify in creative skills and attempt to network with creatives from other cities during the creative production stage. This is not new as the Czech cultural heritage has a legacy of working like this: see '*Brno as a cooperative, cross-discipline hub*' section in chapter five.

The Brno fieldwork observed cases where Brno creatives organised into groups of creatives from different countries, where at least one creative knows the English or French language, and so enabling them to apply for governmental funding that promotes cross-border cooperation. Apart from such top-down initiatives, the tendency of individually formed cross-border cooperation seemed to be more Slavic-orientated. The language barriers of many Czech creatives are a big obstacle influencing knowledge accumulation and its related economy as well as prosperity of the cities. It would be advisable for Brno creatives to be more comfortable in working with a non-Slavic language.

An expanded set of creative networks that goes beyond the city boundary has also been observed in Manchester. However, they seem to be limited to reaching the creative markets and cities that specialise in a particular field, such as Stoke with ceramics.

Second order cities seem to provide good creative production environments, however, local creatives would benefit from developing more networks and access to numerous creative markets. Cities like Manchester and Brno should not only concentrate on promoting settlement of creatives, but also encourage

visiting creatives from other cities and local creatives to visit other places. Encouraging creatives to visit a second order city and stay for a short period of time could potentially encourage sociality, trust building and information exchange with new sets of people, with different resource pools and networks, helping to prevent creative or innovative 'lock-in' and possibly introduce them to new markets. Accessing new markets also involves Internet presence and efficient postal services to take orders and deliver products.

To access a deeper and wider pool of resources, creatives should network with a variety of creative communities. This means creatives should invest more time and energy in travelling and find themselves in the uncomfortable position of being a stranger. Sometimes this is unwelcome and very few creatives have time for doing so (Gu, 2010).

To combat this aforementioned dilemma, it has been observed that socialites are used as an alternative way to bring strangers together. The socialites are described in chapter four as people who naturally combine the roles of 'mediators', 'wanderers', residential ambassadors (Burke, 2009), 'centre-sponsored star' (Goyal, 2009), networkers and 'ice-breaker' for an events company (McRobbie, 2011).

Socialites are often closely tied to a collective workplace, with excellent interpersonal social skills, not afraid of speaking with strangers, and importantly, have the ability to convince people to go to new events. Creatives who regularly go to an event in a collective workplace can use the associated socialites to widen their network by getting them to introduce and acquaint themselves to new people whom the socialites have met, thereby enabling the creatives to have access to the newcomers' large database of contacts. These people should be recognised as essential for the cultural and creative industries, and should be sent to many types of events and if possible after-events. Therefore, the socialites should be seen as key workers in the cultural and creative industries.

### **Suggestions to assist the creative ecosystem**

This thesis has identified places useful as 'breeding grounds' of creativity and the importance for creatives to move around and meet new people as a way to address creative 'lock-in'. It was observed in the ethnography that, while creatives diverge in their activities and the workplaces they use, they do have a common requirement: exchange of knowledge. Chapters seven, nine and ten agree with Storper & Venables (2004) that an efficient method of doing this is through face-to-face encounters. A common way of meeting new people was through collective workplaces like cafés, pubs and common spaces in art studios. The importance of these physical hubs for the industry is not a novel

idea (see chapter two); however, this thesis' contribution to this existing academic knowledge is by analysing the pragmatic changes of these hubs when catering for the different activities that are performed at different times of the day. This section suggests how these changes could be supported.

It is noticeable that daytime activities in collective workplaces were performed individually or among small groups of people,<sup>235</sup> normally for the 'thinking' phase. At this point, these hubs should provide a quiet environment and interior design that give a sense of isolated pockets of spaces. Some places have different rooms (Islington Mill); others provide the sense of changing environments (Sploek).

As day turns to night, the main activity of creatives in collective workplaces turns from individual to collective, notably knowledge exchange through networking. This thesis broadly categorises collective activities in the cultural and creative industries at 'events' and 'after-events'; a further breakdown can be found on figure 40. Events and after-events often involve legal and illegal substances and noise generation. Therefore, I would advise that such physical hubs should fit into Planning Use Class Orders categories, that permit this nocturnal act – for example, in the UK that should be as Sui Generis (Class XVII) or Drinking Establishments (A4). An alternative is to relax the alcohol licensing laws so that it is easier for creative hubs to host these essential proceedings. In any case, it is inevitable that events and after events generate a lot of noise and animation at night, so, planners should think twice when planning such places along with units for residential use. Consequently, I am arguing against the implementation of live/work units in any 'creative cluster', and advocate revisiting and revising the 1990s idea of the 24 hour city (Comedia, 1991).

Chapter 10 showed some geographical commonalities of well-populated collective workplaces in both Manchester and Brno: they were easy to find in terms of seeking the address and navigating without a map. Ideally, collective workplaces would be found close to transport hubs. High virtual visibility and street signage of the collective workplaces would also be useful, particularly for newcomers to the city.<sup>236</sup>

Accessible collective workplaces, with carefully designed interior and pragmatically changing environment, are only part of the formula for a functional 'creative ecosystem'. The conclusion's second finding (above) discussed the importance of linking workplaces with each other. The ethnography showed an important element of the development of a 'Salford-City Centre West' scene is the network of collective workplace that was created by trust between the

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<sup>235</sup> These group activities are often as work meetings.

<sup>236</sup> An example would be me at in my first visit to Brno, when to find Spolek and not knowing you had to go through a dark passageway.

managers. Strong social ties allow for the sharing of resources and information with creatives who are closely associated with these connected workplaces. This may help reduce the dangers of creative 'lock-in'. It takes time for strong social ties to form, so creatives and scenes would benefit from longstanding presence of the workplace managers. Stability of these key workers also allow the manager to develop empathy with local creatives and understanding of their creative activities, which allows the manager a better understanding on how to provide the correct pragmatic changes of these important collective workplaces.

Having a diverse pool of creatives and resources is essential for a creative ecosystem.<sup>237</sup> The insight from the thesis suggests that its productivity is based around a framework of connected collective workplaces and people who empathise with the art world and could provide the 'social glue' for networking. The apparent foundations of this ecosystem could help the distribution of creatives and resources; preventing creative 'lock-in' and help to develop the creative economy. Ideally, there should be a public policy that is designed to sustain and straighten this foundation.

#### **Factors preventing the thesis' policy implementation suggestion**

The longevity of collective workplaces and employment of a manager is fragile. Ideally, it would be helpful if government intervention or support could help prevent the closure of workplaces and the quick turnover of key workers. The literature review illustrated precedents of public policies using creativity as the central pillar. Sections of chapters two and five reviewed the general trend of cultural policy in the UK and the Czech Republic. It was noticeable that Brno did not receive much national public funding for developing the cultural and creative industries – at present, there is no possibility of this thesis' suggested policy implementation through public funding.

The implementation of policy designed to sustain collective workplaces and promote mobility could be more likely in the UK. *The rise of cultural policy* section in chapter two suggests cultural and creative industries in some UK cities has had governmental support since the 1980s, especially planning for regeneration purposes by left-leaning local governments. Markusen & Gadwa (2010), McRobbie (2010) and Peck (2011) observed that the use of creative-orientated development policies became widely adopted by many UK governments in the following decades but with new formulae to cater for new political-economic ideologies and technological advancements: policies in the 1990s and 2000s were increasingly designed around consumption, international competition and economic renewal. Again, like in the Czech Republic, there is

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<sup>237</sup> The creative ecosystem is made up of the environments designed for 'creative production' and the 'creative market', see chapter two.

little possibility of this thesis' suggested policy implementation being adopted nationally, as the trend is moving away from infrastructure provision and support.

It is supposed that problems with the implementation of the policy ideas suggested by this thesis are not restricted to the national context. Between the fieldwork stage (2009) and the publication of this thesis (2013), there has been a change in the European economic climate. The global recession and widespread national austerity measures have rapidly changed the circumstances influencing culture-led policymaking; this may reduce the level of public funding available for sustaining creative-orientated organisations and their workforce. Even the market and brand-orientated policy direction is affected and low in priority for many national governments.

As mentioned in chapter two, proposing universal policies for a culturally sensitive industry could be problematic. Eriksen (2010) had claimed multi-sited and serial ethnographies could highlight universal urban patterns. Indeed, the importance of creatives moving between well-networked collective workplaces was detected; however, the thesis also observed any generalisation of cultural policy cannot be made because of the subtle cultural nuances in networking. Therefore, the case studies of Manchester and Brno cannot claim to have found all the activities, workplaces and people within the cultural and creative industries. For example, the study had not included semi-autonomous public buildings like 'Centri Sociali', which are important for the Italian cultural and creative industry (Membretti, 2007). Ethnographic fieldwork was useful in this study to discover these cultural nuances in the cultural and creative industry; it would be useful to make more fieldworks in other cities in different parts of the world.

### **Reflection on the study**

In this Planning Studies thesis, the targeted goals of studying creatives and their spatial and social requirements have been accomplished by making empirical findings and observations obtained through an ethnomethodological research in a comparative case study of Brno and Manchester. Yet, I feel there are limitations to this research methodology that restrict the full understanding of the creative ecosystem and the ability to suggest new, complete policy tools.

Undertaking fieldwork in more cities could also be useful to better our understanding of creatives and their activities between cities. The most important underdeveloped, yet vital, piece of knowledge for understanding the link of second order cities with the global cultural and creative industries is to observe creatives' networks with cultural gatekeepers, especially in cities with established creative markets, which, however, is still not fully resolved. Ways for researching creative markets in various parts of the world were identified as a

consideration in chapter three of the thesis. Studying this could also help better our understanding of the synergy and movement between hubs with seemingly different cultural nuances in networking. Despite this awareness, it was decided to limit the PhD fieldwork mainly inside Manchester and Brno because of time and cost restrictions and the need to focus on writing thick descriptions (see the *'planning, cities and ethnography'* section in the methodology).

Doing the fieldwork largely by myself also brought an unforeseen problem: fatigue. One problem was that I observed many people, all of whom have different lifestyles and working habits. For example, some who are more active in the morning and others more active at night; there were many times when I had to meet people or attend events until the early hours and then wake up very early in the morning to meet another informant. Being 'on-call' virtually 24 hours a day meant I had little time to relax, reflect and look after my health.<sup>238</sup>

As mentioned in the methodology, another feature of individually executed fieldwork is the 'research bias' (Handwerker, 2001). In the present study, my own lack of interest in literature, meant this group of people were mostly absent from the PhD's ethnography. I suggest ethnographies in cities should be made with a team of researchers who have different sets of interests.

The Brno fieldwork was between August 2008 and February 2009, and the Manchester fieldwork between April 2009 and October 2009. This meant that data collection was performed at different points of the year. This could have an impact on the study as a comparative ethnography because observations recorded two snippets of two time periods. For instance, only the Brno fieldwork was done during the Christmas and New Year period; if the Manchester fieldwork had also been done over this same period, it is probable that the levels of activity and population could be less than what I observed during my field ethnography done between April and October. This undoubtedly, would have resulted in less data capture, as was the case with Brno.

If the research were to be repeated, I suggest it should be year-long fieldworks performed simultaneously by teams of researchers in multiple sites; each team made up of people with various interests in the arts. There should also be more fieldwork sites. Similar research in Asia would be interesting when studying methods of networking and the spaces they use; not only because the continent is an emerging market (Robertson, 2011) but also socialising is typically around a dinner table and the English language may not be the dominant language. With regard to the latter, the English language was observed as a barrier for many Czech creatives entering the creative market. It would be interesting to see if the English, Putonghua (Standard Chinese), or another language is the common language of creative scenes in and around China. If it is not English,

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<sup>238</sup> I became unhealthy and had many minor stress-induced illnesses during the fieldwork.



there are some questions about networking; for example, what is the implication for UK creatives connecting with the Asian market, and which language should Czech creatives learn to optimise their impact on the creative market?

At the time of writing this thesis, it appears government support is difficult to obtain. A part of this study looks at cultural entrepreneurship (chapter five) and observes private enterprises. Enterprises have become less reliant on government intervention and funding, and appear to be more flexible and adept at managing the ever-changing context of the industry and society. It might be useful to do future studies to survey collective workplace enterprises, like Islington Mill, the useful governance tools that may facilitate its sustainability yet give the manager full control of the workplace and develop activities to encourage creatives to move around different collective workplaces.

#### **A summary of the thesis' contribution to knowledge**

The overarching original contribution of this study includes the subtle nuances of creatives' different roles and activities, and how they relate to each other and to the built environment. The final section of this thesis will discuss the study's contribution to knowledge in Planning Studies and the cultural and creative industries.

Developing from my Masters' findings, this thesis began by setting-out a case against Florida's (2002) notion of the 'Creative Class' and ambitiously attempts to reclassify people within the cultural and creative industry. I would not claim to have achieved this completely, however, the study painted a complex narrative of the different roles people within the industry play and why they adopt different roles at various times. Focusing on roles and activities performed by people, not just their professions could have impact on the results of future creative-orientated research or policies on the built environment.

The findings on the locational relationship with creative activities and the formation/exclusion of tribal networks could not have been achieved without the use of the qualitative research method, with employment of multi-sited participant observation that revolves "around chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations" (Marcus G, 1995, p. 105). To my knowledge, it is rare for a researcher in my field to undertake long-sustained participant observation. *The methodology* section spoke of planning researchers arguing the case for ethnography in the discipline. However, they argued for and performed short ethnographic fieldwork strategies of 'following'/'shadowing' and 'quick ethnography' (Handwerker, 2001, McDonald, 2005 and Czarniawska, 2007). Instead, this research took the example, which Falzon & Hall (2011) recommended and undertook fieldwork that lasted seven months in each field site. As a result, this thesis extends the use of ethnography

in Planning Studies and further explored the possibility (and limitations) of long sustained participant observation when researching the cultural and creative industries and cities.

Another contribution is the thesis' use of Brno as a case study to readdress the lack of original creative-orientated studies in Central and Eastern Europe. The fieldwork in Brno does highlight that activities by creatives residing in second order cities of a region, in general, are not exclusively found in their home city, but are spread into other cities and further into various other countries, not solely relying on the nation's capital city. Yet, it is still important to note that the study on this part of Europe is not conclusive. What can be advised is that transferring ostensibly successful creative-orientated policies from core cities like London to a city like Brno may not be successful because of inequality of the dispersal of creatives and supporting arrangements, which comprise the cultural and creative industry ecosystem. These supporting arrangements are not yet clear. This study in Brno should be seen as a springboard or pilot for future research on second order cities in the Central and Eastern European region.

Even with the limitations of the research, noted in the previous section, the study did give new insight into creatives' stages of work, the different activities performed within each of these stages and the factors influencing the performance of each activity – for example, language skills, distractions from activities of daily living, drinking culture, potential face-to-face encounters and the ambience of a space. The report on the influence of micro-level management of space and personal relationships is particularly intriguing and should be a consideration for future studies. The comparison of second order cities with different cultural contexts unearthed potentially new research agendas in understanding the foundations for the creative ecosystem: socialites and 'situational management' of collective workplaces. The new understanding gained from this thesis in terms of the importance of the micro-scale environments in influencing the development of creatives' phases of activities and networking opportunities has not to my knowledge been considered before.

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: DVD content

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*Islington Mill Case Study*. YouTube link: <http://youtu.be/doX2OSkjUHE>

Movie 1: *A few people looking at the art work at a preview at International 3, Manchester. June 2009. [figure 42]*. YouTube link: [http://youtu.be/bhYfIF4\\_F6I](http://youtu.be/bhYfIF4_F6I)

Movie 2: *After-event drinks in the Bulls Head, Manchester. June 2009. [figure 44]*. YouTube link: <http://youtu.be/-9RrNydZQXs>

Movie 3: *A slow-motion pan of Spolek. During the day, it is normal for people to work or read newspapers in the white room, and have conversations in the green room. March 2009. [figure 46]*. YouTube link: <http://youtu.be/JBnwH4F2N7Y>

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Figure 34: I went to an afternoon event in Manchester city centre and when I came back there was a discarded heroin kit next to Islington Mill. Someone from Islington Mill called the council to dispose of it, but it was not cleaned until two days later. I am not aware of anyone from Islington Mill who takes heroin. One resident suggested it was from a nearby residential block. Photograph by Aaron Mo, May 2009: page 163.

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Figure 38: Information about a forthcoming event at the Chinese Art Centre, in a Castlefield Gallery event in figure 37. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009: page 171.

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Figure 49: When a band plays at the main stage, the furniture is put to the side. Photograph by Aaron Mo, April 2009: page 193.

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Figure 52: For talks, the sofas and chairs are facing the projection. Photograph by Aaron Mo, August 2009: page 195.

Figure 53: As club space, some furniture are kept to the side, but most of them are stored away. Photograph by Aaron Mo, July 2009: page 195.

### Appendix 3: Codes, memos and sorting

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Like any comprehensive thesis, the raw data must be translated as a narrative and put in an analytical context. This is especially true for an ethnographic-orientated thesis. If not, the data just reads as a collection of interesting but unrelated anecdotes, “akin to a series of stories portraying slices of life in vivid detail” (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 1995, p. 63). Emerson et al. added that the process to translate fieldnotes into an academic thesis requires reflexive or dialectical interplay between theory and data. The analysis is shaped by the coding and diagramming of data; it is then further theorised through the development, comparison, and sorting of memos. There are computer programs that help speed up these processes, particularly when handling primary and secondary data from, e.g., fieldnotes and memos. I decided to code and generate memos manually for two reasons. First, I did not want to learn how to use these programs; also, I was concerned about the restrictions in coding privileges (St John & Johnson, 2000).

Coding is a painfully slow, but necessary process that filters notes, images, and artefacts collected in the field to its purist meaning. This allows the labelling of segments of data that become the various themes within the aim of this research. According to Charmaz (2006), the suggested coding procedure includes the initial, focused, axial, and theoretical phases. See Glaser & Strauss (1967), Bernard, (2011), Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (1995), and Charmaz (2006) for detailed guidelines on all coding techniques.

Initial coding reads and reflects on data on its face value. This phase was done in my room every night or morning of the fieldwork period. After collating the day’s data on to my computer, the next stage was to ask myself what each of the data suggested, from whose point of view, and to which theoretical category these data fit. Initial coding is meant to be done quickly and subjected to change. I also coded still and moving images by labelling, via iPhoto and iMovie, with their appropriate codes and collated them into the correct folders. At this stage, there were large amounts of potential categories. The most frequent or what I considered significant, categories were compared and further synthesised in the next stage. Focused coding is a more time-consuming process than the first phase. Therefore, it was done both at the field, namely, home or a café when I had no events planned that day and straight after the fieldwork<sup>239</sup>. This coding phase was not simply the case of shrinking the categories to more robust theoretical themes, but it was also a way of prompting me to look at raw data afresh. The focused coding can lead to the formation of

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<sup>239</sup> I spent almost a month in London after the Brno fieldwork, and before I move to Wrocław after the Manchester fieldwork. I returned to Central Eastern Europe because the re-exposure would be useful during the analysis of data, in that I would remind myself of the cultural and creative industries’ difference and similarities in a Central Eastern Europe context. I lived in Poland because I had free accommodation in the city.

the main categories: creatives, activities, space and place, and networks. Once the main categories are formed, the subcategories are made through axial coding. According to Charmaz (2006) “the purposes of axial coding are to sort, synthesize, and organize large amounts of data and reassemble them in new ways after open [initial] coding” (p. 60), i.e., the details and subtleties of the raw data are used to form the ‘frame’ of the thesis. The final phase, theoretical coding, conceptualises how the ‘coding families’ are related to each other within the categorical framework I had established (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63).

As with the data collection phase, we need to prioritise the most relevant data or important events. Priorities were decided from my past and present involvements and interactions with people, perspectives, and research practices. My unintentionally preconceived codes could be created from my pre-PhD experience, most notably from my experience in New York, and theoretical literature. Therefore, in *Part 3: The Ethnography* of the thesis, I constantly referred back to my experience and the literature review.

Memos are more detailed jottings that pay attention to the codes. The memos that are written during the fieldwork are like conversations to oneself; in addition to observations, they mention thoughts and comparisons and future considerations and pursuits. These were done in word documents every evening in my bedroom. As Charmaz (2006) puts it, “memo-writing provides a space to become actively engaged in your materials, to develop your ideas, and to fine-tune your subsequent data-gathering” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 72). As the months went on, patterns were identified, codes were changed, removed, or established, and headings (or ‘conceptual categories’) were used.

It is always worth reviewing the raw data and codes. Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995) suggest that a researcher “might suddenly have a flash of insight and see an alternate way of perceiving events and might change how she composes her tale accordingly” (p. 225). I had also used diagramming techniques when re-comparing, contracting, and relating codes. These illustrations “tease out relationships while constructing their analyses and to demonstrate these relationships in their complete works” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 117). Coding and diagramming were usually done whilst in transit or sitting at a café. These are the best places for me to reflect on my work. Moreover, I had reviewed my notes once the fieldwork ended. Time, and living outside my study sites, allowed me more objectivity to reflect on.

An objective of the thesis is to find patterns of artistic production and networks in two different parts of Europe. Finding patterns requires ‘constant comparison’. It is important to analyse similarities and most differences for more than one site (Goulding, 2005). The sites need not be identical, but must be able to fit within the theoretical framework created from coding. I choose to study Manchester and Brno because of their similar regional governmental

roles and industrial heritage to reduce the variables during this comparative study. Of course, the comparative studies could not be done until the second fieldwork commenced. Therefore, the data collected in the second case would be more systematic than the first fieldwork, i.e., my memos and codes from the Brno fieldwork directed the focus of my data collection in Manchester. Therefore, I had more detailed data from Manchester (and hence, the long film in Manchester). In this case, I used my Brno data to confirm patterns or to illustrate the European differences.

Sorting codes and memos provides the frame for the narrative and context of the thesis and cements the 'core categories'. The final stage of the theory development process is the construction of a core category (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). A core category pulls together all the concepts in order to explain the phenomenon [ecology and working practices of the cultural and creative industries]. It should have theoretical significance and should be traceable back through the data. This is usually when the theory is written up and integrated with existing theories to show relevance, fit, and/or extension." (Goulding, 2005, p. 297). Finally, writing of the thesis can then begin.

## Appendix 4: Ethics

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Because ethnographic research takes place among living human beings and records human data, it was compulsory that I register for data protection and gain approval from UCL research ethics committee before I began the fieldworks<sup>240</sup>. Genzuk (1999) summarised the ethical concerns well:

*“In a nutshell, researchers must make their research goals clear to the members of the community where they undertake their research and gain the informed consent of their consultants to the research beforehand. [...] Most of all, researchers must be sure that the research does not harm or exploit those among whom the research is done.” (Genzuk, 1999, p. 9)*

I never endangered myself, any of my assistants, or informants.

Throughout the fieldwork, I informed my informants about my research and, if possible, gave business cards with information about my research in English and Czech. All the jottings, still and moving images were either taken with me in a bag or kept in a locked room. By doing this, the possibility of theft was limited.

Also important to note is that when writing this thesis I protected the informants, by altering some information that is useful for the flow of this narrative, but need not be accurate, such as the name of the informant.

I registered for UCL Data Protection<sup>241</sup> on 19 June 2008, gained ethics approval on 15 October 2008 and submitted a findings report to UCL Research Ethics Committee on 3 November 2009<sup>242</sup>.

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<sup>240</sup> For more information please visit: [ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk](http://ethics.grad.ucl.ac.uk).

<sup>241</sup> UCL Data Protection Registration, reference No 6364106/2008/6/24, Section 19, Research: Social Research.

<sup>242</sup> Ethics Application 1587/001.